

TEXAS:

THE

RISE, PROGRESS, AND PROSPECTS

OF THE

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY

WILLIAM KENNEDY, Esq.

"Texas is one of the finest countries in the world, and yet the Europeans, eager as they have been to make conquests in America, have seemed, almost to the present day, ignorant of its existence."

History of Louisiana, by M. de Marbois, Peer of France, First President of the Court of Accounts, under Napoleon and Louis XVIII.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

R. HASTINGS, 13, CAREY STREET,

LINCOLN'S INN.

1841.

LONDON:
Printed by William Clowes and Sons,
Stamford Street.

TO

THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUESS OF NORMANBY

HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT,

THIS WORK,

DESCRIPTIVE OF A FAIR AND FERTILE TERRITORY,

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE

STRUGGLE OF A FREE-BORN PEOPLE FOR THEIR RIGHTS,

AND ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

PROGRESS OF THAT PEOPLE UNDER UNEXAMPLED

DIFFICULTIES,

IS, WITH PERMISSION,

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The complete Map of the Republic of Texas has been compiled from the best published authorities, including the maps of Stephen Austin, Mitchell (Philadelphia), and surveys made under the sanction of the Texan Government. To these is to be added Le Grand's original survey, of the precise date of which, owing to a manuscript omission, I am not certain,—the point is trifling, but the survey must have been made in 1830 or 1831. To the zeal and skill of Mr. Arrowsmith I am materially indebted for a map which, without pretending to absolute accuracy, is a great improvement upon all preceding ones, and will serve every practical purpose of the politician and emigrant.

The necessity of correcting the sheets of this work at a considerable distance from London, has delayed its appearance beyond the anticipated period.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

BOOK I.

Chapter I.

Chapter II.

DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE,

AND

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

In the years 1836-37 my attention was attracted by statements, republished from the American newspapers by the press of this country, concerning the revolt of the province of Texas from the Mexican Republic. From these statements it appeared that the people of Texas were chiefly of Anglo-American origin, that they were altogether insignificant in number, compared with the inhabitants of Mexico, and that, nevertheless, they had succeeded in establishing their independence by force of arms. So far as books could furnish an acquaintance with a distant nation, I was no stranger to the growth of the United States and the energy of their inhabitants. Neither was I incapable of estimating the superiority of the North Americans to the mixed population which, under the general name of Mexican, lay scattered within and adjacent to the Tropic, yet

still I could not clearly understand how the settlers of Texas were enabled to repel the armies of Mexico and to found a Republic of their own. Envying the leisure of those who can satisfy even a fleeting curiosity by travelling at once to the place where direct information may be obtained, I was obliged to trust for the gratification of mine to the revelations of the future.

The year 1838 unexpectedly opened to me a prospect of visiting Texas. Early in that year, the late Earl of Durham, who had for a considerable period honoured me with his confidence and regard, accepted the office of Governor-general of Canada. His lordship, knowing that I should highly appreciate the distinction of being attached to so important a mission, and aware that I had a theoretical and practical knowledge of the subject of municipal corporations, proposed that I should undertake the office of commissioner for inquiring into the municipal institutions of Lower Canada, with a view to their improvement. In accordance with this proposal, I left England, in the Sirius steam-vessel bound for New York, where I landed, after a short and agreeable voyage, and, proceeding to my destination, reported my arrival at Quebec in the beginning of June.

Of various noticeable matters which fell under my observation during my residence in Canada, I have preserved either record or remembrance. But those matters are foreign to the purpose of this narrative, and, were it otherwise, they are so blended with saddening recollections associated with the memory of him whom I served with affectionate fidelity, that I would not willingly touch upon them now.

Shortly after my arrival, I was commissioned to inquire into the state of certain parishes below Quebec, where the French Canadians were, it was alleged, suffering great distress. The inquiry was not uninteresting, as it afforded me the most favourable opportunity of examining the character and condition of the people. Hiring a calash, and securing the services of its accustomed driver, I journeyed along the right bank of the St. Lawrence as far as Rimouski, then retraced my course to Kamouraska, where I crossed the St. Lawrence to Malbaie, and, proceeding up the left bank of the river, returned to Quebec.

The *habitans* in the districts I visited had, with the exception of those in the parish of St. Thomas, near Quebec, escaped the Papineau mania, which raged among their countrymen in the districts of

Three Rivers and Montreal. They are a mild, inoffensive people, unconscious of any form of government except that imposed by their clergy, who, so far as order and morals are concerned, appeared to me faithful and exemplary in the discharge of their trust. In the more remote parishes, I found the population suffering severely for want of a sufficiency of wholesome food. Small traders and notaries had taken advantage of their occasional necessities to burthen them with debt; their modes of agriculture were obsolete; their crops unsuited to a rigorous and capricious climate; their seed-corn bad; their lands exhausted. Having been empowered by the government to make sparing disbursements for the relief of extreme cases, I advanced some money in different places on parochial or individual security. There being an anxious desire among the younger folks, in the most distressed parishes, to remove to new settlements, I recommended that locations should be granted them on the Saguenay, a land of promise in their eyes, which would, however, present but few attractions to British colonists.

During my inquiries among these poor people, I noticed an error in the colonial administration as regarded the whole of their race. Prejudiced and

ignorant, destitute of a wealthy and educated class, they have known nothing of British rule save through the interested representations of the notaries and other Tritons of the rivulet, whom they had sent to the House of Assembly, and who were generally petty jobbers, devoid of honesty and public spirit. How this evil is to be remedied under the United Canadian Legislature, I cannot see. With regard to the distressed population, perhaps the best course would be to encourage the young men and women to form insulated settlements in the upper province. Drafted in considerable bodies, and accompanied by their clergy, they would be glad to remove from a worn-out soil to new lands, where they might form safe, and, in some degree, useful communities. At all events, it would, I conceive, be sounder economy to provide for their wants in this manner, than to continue to aid them with public money in the form of loans, never to be repaid, as has been the system for years.

On the 23rd of August, the Governor-general issued a commisssion to Mr. Charles Buller to inquire into the municipal institutions of Lower Canada, and on the 25th, I was appointed assistant municipal commissioner, conjointly with Mr. Thom. Mr. Buller's multifarious duties, as Chief Secretary,

left him little time to attend to the commission of which he was the head, and Mr. Thom, also, was frequently called away to assist in matters in which his experience as a Canadian lawyer was of value. The business of the inquiry, therefore, mainly devolved upon me; and although the duty was by no means severe, yet it was, to the last degree, uninteresting. With slight exception those municipal regulations of the province that were actually in operation were confused, meagre, and utterly ineffective for good.

Events in England, followed by Lord Durham's determination to retire from the government, brought the commission to a premature close. His lordship, who had in a written communication volunteered the grateful assurance that he considered me "one of the truest and most devoted of his friends," intimated, on the eve of his departure, that the affairs of the commission might be wound up, and that I was free to return home. I had a private interview by his desire the day he left Quebec, when, after expressing his approval of my conduct and services, and sanctioning my intention to travel, he bade me farewell in terms that touched my heart. Believing that I had an inclination to linger in countries where money does not constitute the pre-

dominant standard of human value, his last words at parting were—"let me see you again in England."

The first time I saw Lord Durham (in 1833), I was drawn to him by a sentiment of attachment which seemed to be reciprocal. Whatever trust he reposed in me afterwards, strengthened that sentiment, for his soul was a mirror, on which meanness and duplicity had never left a shade. Even in the irritabilities of his quick temperament, there always seemed to me a gladdening leaven of human kindness. His foibles belonged to the accidents of his position—his virtues were his own; and, for my part, I could more readily excuse the unpremeditated overflow of an impetuous temperament than tolerate the frigid self-sufficiency which intrenches itself behind specious formalities for the conservation of its prerogative, real or supposed. Truth, justice, and honesty were the pervading elements of Lord Durham's moral nature, and, because they were, I honoured him when living, and mourned him when dead. As a public man, he was surpassed by none in devotion to his country, and equalled by few in a clear perception of its interests; but he was in advance of his time, and paid the usual penalty for being so.

The chief commissioner, Mr. Charles Buller, and my co-assistant, Mr. Thom, intending to proceed direct to England, and the Municipal Report, so far as we were justified in presenting one, requiring some further inquiry at Montreal, I proposed, after we had agreed upon the basis of certain recommendations, to remain (at my own expense) and complete the details of the work. I remained accordingly, during the rebellion, despatched the Report to London about the end of December, and then started for the United States—having two objects in view; first, to examine the working of the State Legislatures, and secondly, to visit Texas. I was well provided with credentials. Lord Durham had furnished me with an introduction to Mr. Fox, the British Minister at Washington; and the Count de Survilliers (Joseph Bonaparte), and other gentlemen of note and consideration in the United States, had recommended me to the hospitalities of their American friends.

I made a halt at Albany, the Legislature of the State of New York being then in session, and received the kindest attentions from some very estimable families to whom I had letters from Sir John Eustace of the Guards, then in Canada. To Mr. Bradish, Lieutenant-governor of the State, I am indebted for

a number of valuable books and documents, indicating the mode in which the business of the State is transacted. I had been led to select this special subject of inquiry from a desire to ascertain how far it might be practicable to introduce a system of local legislation into the United Kingdom, by means of which Parliament might be eased of the consideration of private bills—a portion of its duties executed at a maximum of cost and a minimum of efficiency. To Ireland, in particular, it appeared to me that a Legislature, limited in its functions to matters strictly local, would be productive of all the benefits of an independent Parliament, without hazarding any of its political dangers. As such a Legislature would be occupied chiefly in educing the physical resources of the country, and as its measures would bear directly upon property, I thought that a franchise high enough to allay the apprehensions of the timid, might be established, with perfect regard to equity. I reckoned among the benefits of such a system, the bringing together of persons of different sects and parties, upon the ground of common advantage; the periodical concentration of the titled and moneyed aristocracy in Dublin; the attraction of capital to the country on local security, and the consequent liberation of the other divisions of the

empire from expenditure on public works in Ireland. With these views, and

> "For the satisfaction of a thought—
> No further harm"—

I busied myself in making observations and collecting materials in such of the States as promised to exhibit the subject in new or striking lights.

After a short stay in New York, a sort of hybrid city, neither American nor European, I proceeded to Washington, to have a glance at Congress. While there I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Clay, Mr. Webster, and other political magnates, whom I always found courteous in manners and instructive in conversation. From Mr. Clay, who when in Washington is overwhelmed with business, I received an invitation to visit him at Ashland, his seat in Kentucky, but, unfortunately, subsequent arrangements did not permit me to avail myself of his kindness. The North-eastern Boundary question wore quite as feverish an aspect at that period (the winter of 1839) as it does now. General Winfield Scott, pacificator in the M'Leod affair, was then despatched to Maine in the same benignant character. I had some conversation with him just before he set out, and like a truly brave and patriotic as well as enlightened man, he evinced, both by language and

demeanour, his sincere desire for the maintenance of peace between his country and mine.

This, I am sorry to say, was not the general feeling in the Northern States of the Union; on the contrary, among the mass of the people, there was a levity in contemplating war which astonished and pained, and a bitterness in speaking of England which irritated and annoyed me. Among the wealthy and educated, hostility to British *interests* assumed the place of antipathy to the British people, to whom indeed they were ready to accord all the respect and extend all the civilities to which collectively or individually they might be entitled. I was, however, exceedingly pleased to find, that among the superior officers of the army and navy—veterans who had served with credit against Great Britain in the war of 1812—there existed a cordial disposition to do justice to England and to cultivate friendly relations with her people. While, professionally, they would have rejoiced at being called into active service—so far as my military and naval acquaintance extended—the members of both professions concurred in the hope (in which I heartily joined) that harmony between the two nations might long be maintained. While in company with some officers of rank in the United States' army, the probable results of a

war, in case hostilities should break out, were good-humouredly discussed. I fought the battles of my own land as gallantly as I could, without disparagement to her assumed opponent, claiming, of course, ultimate success in the hypothetical struggle. On the other side, it was admitted that in the outset, superior discipline, and military resources more ample and immediate, would give us the advantage, but that in a year or two, at all events, in three or four, these advantages would be counterbalanced, and victory be secured to the Union. Should war take place, I am firmly of opinion that it will not be of short duration; for its object, on the part of the United States, will be to lower the dictatorial tone too often assumed by Englishmen, to eradicate British influence from North America, and to raise domestic manufactures to a pitch that may enable them to maintain their ground afterwards in defiance of foreign competition.

The small and politically repudiated section of American "Abolitionists," operating upon the Anti-slavery party in England, are materially facilitating the views of the war and anti-British class of politicians in the United States. This section, which has its head-quarters in the sphere of those commercial and manufacturing interests that toil unweariedly to

overtop our own, carries on, by means of hired emissaries and pamphleteers, a constant warfare against the slave-holding States, which, being wholly agricultural, are anxious to have a free exchange of their products for the manufactures of England. The Abolitionists predominate in manufacturing Massachusetts, and their prime orator and representative is Mr. John Quincy Adams. Every insulated fact, or floating newspaper figment, that may be calculated to darken the character of the Southern planters in the estimation of the moral and religious world of Europe, is carefully collected by the pro-tariff philanthropists, published in cheap little books, with illustrative cuts, and sent across the Atlantic, where they receive fresh circulation, and call forth the indignant denunciations of the excellent persons who essay to regenerate the world by periodical resolutions at Exeter Hall.

Contenting myself by saying, what I believe in my conscience (and not without observation) to be true, that negro slavery never existed in a milder form than it does in the United States—that the efforts of the Abolitionists tend only to frustrate their declared object—and that a more humane, generous, and high-minded class of men does not exist than the Southern planters,—I shall simply remark, that

the influence exercised by the American Abolitionists has the effect of sowing dissensions between England and the slave-holding States, and thus preventing their approximation on principles of free trade. The more insecure the social position of the Southern States, the more are they at the mercy of the Northern and Middle, for the aggrandisement of whose merchants, manufacturers, and ship-owners, they are oppressively taxed, to the injury of ours.

The present United States' Tariff will expire in 1842, and the principles on which it is to be renewed form a question of primary importance to the several sections of the Union. Mr. Van Buren's administration was favourable to Southern views of trade. General Harrison's cannot be considered so, with Mr. Webster, as the principal officer of the Cabinet. I was much struck when I heard from Mr. Webster, at Washington, a decided opinion in favour of the maintenance of our corn-laws, the retention of which he pronounced to be wisdom. The enunciation of this opinion by an able and enlightened statesman set me thinking, and then it occurred to me that the very same principle was involved in the "protection" of New England manufacturers as of British landholders. I afterwards discussed the question with Mr. Kennedy, a member of Congress,

from Baltimore, who, being of the same party as Mr. Webster, took a precisely similar view of the subject. A very worthy old gentleman, Mr. Kennedy's father-in-law, himself a large manufacturer, happening to be present, put an end to the argument by frankly declaring, that, if the English corn-laws were abolished, he must close his manufactories; adding, however, that the short-sighted obstinacy of British landlords left him no great apprehension of such a result.

It is possible that the Northern interests are apprehensive that the Southern and South-western States will not assent to such a renewal of the Tariff as would satisfy their selfish views. Failing the attainment of their object in this way, there remains but one other mode of securing it, namely, by war. The United States, rich in unsettled boundary questions (having one with Russia * and another with Texas, besides those of Maine and the Oregon territory, in which England is concerned), cannot be at a loss for pretexts for quarrel. The only difficulty would be to obtain the concurrence of the wholly agricultural sections of the Union in a line of policy all the evils arising from which would fall upon them, while all the benefits would flow to the North. But this difficulty may, perhaps, be obviated by British

* The La Bodega dispute—strictly speaking, a question of intrusive settlement by Russia in California.

interference in the domestic affairs of the slave-holding States, and by the continuance of those restrictive laws which refuse to allow our American debtors to discharge their obligations with American produce. Assuming that the Federal Union decides upon war with this country, ways and means, profit and loss, will of course be calculated. The following form part of the war estimates with the section favourable to a rupture:—

For the support of the war, the two millions sterling remitted annually to England, as interest on loans, will remain in the States. Every thing requisite for the equipment and supply of troops can be drawn from the internal resources of the country. The debt to be incurred will, consequently, be owing, not to foreigners, but Americans;—a National Debt will increase the stability of the Federal system, and a National Bank will relieve the distress and embarrassment consequent upon hostilities and the stoppage of external trade. War will also tend to adjust sectional differences, and to impart a more homogeneous aspect to the Union. New York and one or two Atlantic cities, containing a large amount of British property, may, it is true, be injured or destroyed, but European troops can make no permanent impression on the country, and the cost of rebuilding a few towns is not too great a price to pay

for maritime and manufacturing supremacy on the American continent.

These ideas are not speculative: I have heard them openly expressed at different times and places, when travelling through the United States; and the knowledge of the fact that they are current, while it can do no harm, may assist in warding off the contingency to which they refer. Let me hope that it will have the effect of inducing my countrymen to adopt a policy diametrically opposite to that of Mr. Webster and the Northern manufacturers. It will be in their power, by adjusting their commercial relations with the United States on the basis of an equitable reciprocity, to dispel the cloud of war, and to unite in bonds indissoluble two kindred nations (the greatest in the world), whose *comprehensive* interests are not antagonist, and who cannot engage in mortal conflict without making the whole globe the theatre of their vindictive and desolating passions, and arresting the progress of civilization.

Washington, during the session of Congress, is the scene of much gaiety, but I was soon glad to escape from balls and parties. The most brilliant entertainment I attended was given by the Russian Minister, Mr. Bodisco, who certainly carried away the palm from the *corps diplomatique* in providing

amusements for the fair and fashionable. Among the arrangements of Mr. Bodisco's establishment, I could not help being attracted by the splendid garniture of a posse of black servants, who, with cocked hats and vestments stiff with "Barbaric pearl and gold," did their ministering in a style of conscious importance that must have rejoiced the self-love of "All the Russias," could they have witnessed by delegation the gorgeous show. I have been tempted into a notice of these sable servitors by a characteristic anecdote, which I heard in reference to the trappings with which they were invested.

The Russian Minister had been waited upon previously by white attendants—an excellent class in the States, when well chosen, but, of course, with Republican ideas of personal dignity. On a certain day, Mr. Bodisco summoned his male domestics, who were attired in the usual garb of citizens, and announced, with an air of graciousness, that his imperial master, the Emperor, had, as a mark of respect, been pleased personally to select a uniform for his (the Minister's) household, which was of the most attractive description, and which he invited them to examine, in full persuasion of their grateful acceptance of the same. After a brief survey of the cocked hats, emblazoned coats, and glowing in-

expressibles, the "helps" withdrew to hold a conference in a corner of the apartment. After due deliberation, one of the body intimated their unanimous decision, that, for any free citizen to wear such mountebank equipments out of doors was quite impossible, but there was a minority of their number not indisposed to wear them in-doors, provided a suitable addition (one dollar per diem) were made to their pay. The negotiation terminated abruptly, and the offended Minister transferred the insulted habiliments to the readily-acquiescent Africans, who bore their sartorial honours with evident elation. I may add that I have not seen white servants in livery in the United States, except once or twice in New York, and there the uniform was of such an unostentatious description as hardly to merit the name.

Incidents of this kind, which originate in obvious causes, are frequently the source of grievous dissatisfaction to a certain class of English sojourners in the United States, who avenge themselves for the suppression of bile while in the country, by publishing caricatures when they return home. They do not give themselves the trouble of inquiring whether the subject of their complaint be a necessary result of a particular social organization,

or merely a vicious custom, removable at will. Neither have they the candour to set off the praiseworthy against the censurable practices, or to discriminate between those who have offended against generally received etiquette, and those who are its scrupulous adherents. For the solecisms in manners which may be detected at the promiscuous table of a steam-boat or hotel, a whole nation is put unceremoniously to the ban; as Voltaire, when he reached Alsace on a tour, and came under the roof of a red-haired landlady, noted in his journal, "*Mem.*—All the women of Alsace are red-haired."

In every foreign country, some practices and observances will arise uncongenial to a stranger's notion of the correct and the agreeable. The Englishman in Paris and the Frenchman in London have their several small afflictions, to which nothing but time can reconcile them. Both will deem themselves martyrs to reprehensible usage; and John Bull, very likely, will commence by a prodigious outburst of national wrath against France and Frenchmen. Now such a demonstration in no degree amends the order of things, but, on the contrary, is the forerunner of disturbed digestion, and therefore to be avoided by all prudent and prescription-shunning men. Although not lacking

gall "to make oppression bitter," nor by any means passive under minute vexations, yet I have laid down a rule for my guidance when in foreign countries which has kept me within the limits prescribed by fairness and common sense, and which I shall therefore mention for the edification of others. If a person discover that he is less handsomely treated (without provocation on his part) than a native of the country where he pilgrimages, under the same average circumstances, he is warranted in protesting and complaining; but if his treatment be similar to that of a native of his own condition and apparent claims, it is his duty to eat, drink, and be thankful, especially where, as in the United States, he is, neither by dress nor language, distinguishable as a stranger.

Many of our young men of rank and wealth, when travelling in America, acquit themselves but indifferently among a sagacious, energetic, and unbending people; others, of larger faculties and better training, adapt themselves to altered circumstances with a good grace. I was amused with the secret distress of one of the latter class, Captain Alexander Gordon, son of Lord Aberdeen, who arrived at Fuller's Hotel, in Washington, a day or two after I had been independently installed in an

apartment of that hostelry; and as the rule is "first come, first served," the house being crowded, he was obliged to accept the joint occupancy of a room in which were two beds besides his own, with their respective tenants. The young soldier, reluctant to make his morning toilette in the presence of two strangers, was occasionally held in bedchamber durance until a rather late hour; and, on my rating him with indolence, revealed the cause,—to which he had submitted with uncomplaining patience. When liberated, however, he made the best use of his time, visiting the arsenals and public works, and proving, by his pertinent questions and remarks, that he had acquired much practical information, and was desirous to acquire more. I felt proud of my young countryman, and set him down as destined to professional eminence. Let me hope that he will forgive this rambling introduction of his name.

The necessary brevity of this sketch does not permit me to tarry at the seat of the Federal Legislature—a place that accorded ill with my tastes and habits, and which probably suffered somewhat in my estimation from my being at the time in delicate health. Moreover, all around me were stirring actors, and I merely a speculative observer; so that the days became wearisome, and the even-

ings were chiefly devoted to a routine of entertainments, only productive of melancholy or *ennui*, unless one can yield oneself up to them in forgetfulness of every thing else.

Leaving Washington with a lively sense of American good-will, of which I had received many proofs, especially from General Wool, of the United States army, I returned to New York, and having learned from Mr. Thom (then on his route from England to exercise judicial functions among the trappers of the North-west) that the Report in which I was interested had been received and printed for Parliamentary use, I prepared for travelling beyond the Sabine; nothing dismayed by the alarming accounts which I received of Texas and its people from my Northern acquaintances, who placed before me the agreeable alternatives of being eaten by Indians, sliced by bowie-knives, or pressed for a soldier. I selected the line of the coast, and journeyed through Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama, without the occurrence of any remarkable incident, until I left Mobile in a steam-boat for New Orleans.

The eye and mind both fatigued with threading the woody solitudes of Florida, I had arrived at Pensacola, and having no temptation to remain

there beyond a day, I pushed on to Mobile, whence a steamer was announced to start in a few hours for New Orleans. It was a beautiful afternoon in April as we cleft the waters of the bay; and I indulged in pleasant anticipations connected with my trip. The sun went down serenely—the evening meal was over—the passengers had retired to their berths, and I, merely stripping off my coat, as the atmosphere was close and sultry, had adjusted myself to rest upon a sofa. Between eleven and twelve o'clock at night, I was awakened from a heavy sleep by the screams of women, and cries of "The vessel's on fire!" I ran upon deck, and found every body in consternation and disorder. An iron partition between the fuel and the furnace of the steamer had become so heated as to ignite the former; and, to increase the general panic, the night had grown pitch-dark, the wind began to blow furiously, and by-and-bye lightning streamed as though the heavens were on fire, and thunder crashed as if "chaos had come again." It was my first introduction to the thunder of the Mexican Gulf; and, had I been easy in other respects, I could have heard its awfully-magnificent peals with a feeling not remote from enjoyment. But all thought of the grand artillery of southern skies was lost in the immediate danger

of my situation. I was far from the land of my birth—unknown to every soul on board—my friends, unadvised of the particulars of my course, would, if I perished, remain in ignorance of my fate. The last reflection was of all the most painful. How rapid is the action of the mind in situations of extreme peril! The prominent events and scenes of past life swept in review before me—and then came the seemingly fast-approaching future. It is at such a moment that a man discovers what he has been, what he is, and what he ought to be.

The heavens were alternately death-dark and blazing with electric fire; and I feared that the lightning would strike the vessel. There were a number of American emigrants on board, with their wives and children, shaping their course for Texas. While the officers of the vessel were assuring the passengers that there was no danger, I learned that part of the crew were taking possession of the boats. I had conversed during the day with one of the emigrant party—its leader apparently—a shrewd, resolute-looking farmer, who, in common with some of his companions, had his rifle on board. Having provided myself with my travelling pistols and swimming-belt, I proposed to this man to dislodge the skulkers from the boats, and hold them for the

women and children—offering to take my chance with the last on deck. While making the suggestion as quietly as I could, a woman, indignant, I suppose, at my apparent coolness, said, "Ah! you have taken good care of yourself!"—pointing to my swimming-belt, which, in such a night, would have been of very little avail. I told her that, if it were of service at all, it would perhaps enable me, being a swimmer, to save the lives of others. With the aid of the emigrants and their rifles, I succeeded in clearing and securing the boats. All this time, the master of the steamer, a young man bedizened with rings and chains, seemed unable to do or to advise anything. We then set about ascertaining the real extent of our danger, and found that the burning portion of the pile of wood was near the centre, and fortunately unexposed to the action of the wind. By covering the heap with wet blankets, and deluging the ignited part with water, the fire was subdued, and we arrived in safety at the desired landing-place—whence a few miles of railroad brought me to the gay, polished, and spirited city of New Orleans, where business and amusement preside over three-fourths of the year, and lassitude and disease tyrannize over the remainder.

I sailed from New Orleans to Galveston in Texas

in the steamer Columbia. The weather was delightful, the accommodations excellent, and the master of the vessel (Mr. Henry Windle) orderly, unassuming, and scrupulously attentive to the comfort of his passengers. We reached our destination in forty-eight hours; and the hotels and boarding-houses being crowded, I remained for a day or two on board the Columbia. Having mingled freely with all sorts of people, and roamed over the low sandy shores of the island, I proceeded in a steamer to Houston, at that time the seat of government.

After examining the character of the soil, and inquiring into the general resources of the country, I directed my attention to the government, religion, laws, police, and manners. I found a stable government, religion respected, laws well administered, protection afforded to property and person, and the general tone of manners the same as in the United States. Every facility for acquiring information was cheerfully given by President Lamar and the members of his Cabinet. Astonished to perceive a condition of things so entirely different from what I had been led to expect by the people and press of the Northern States, I intimated an intention to publish a work on the Republic, on my return to England, for the purpose of explaining its true po-

sition. To enable me to carry out this resolve, I commenced the collection of documents, which I continued indefatigably in the United States, until I had amassed such a number as warranted me in attempting something more substantial and useful than that irresponsible and, often, illusory production, a modern book of travels.

Shortly before I quitted Houston, I was invited to a "champagne supper" at the quarters of Mr. Henry Thompson, an accomplished member of the Texan bar. The guests were chiefly government officers and gentlemen of the legal profession. After supper, Branch Tanner Archer, who presided at the General Consultation of Texas, held at San Felipe de Austin, on the 3rd of November, 1835, was called to the chair. Having accepted the call, the chairman craved a bumper to a toast, which he said every citizen of Texas would pledge with all his heart—"The health of the youthful Sovereign of the British empire." "The land over whose political destinies Queen Victoria had been called upon to preside was the land of their forefathers, and if the United States were their mother—England was their grandmother-country. It was that venerable but endearing degree of relationship which she held towards Texas. Great and glorious had been the career of

Britain, and he hoped that they, the last of her descendants that had been admitted into the family of nations, would prove themselves not unworthy of her future or past renown. He trusted the day was not distant when, by her recognition of the right which patriotism had established by an untarnished sword, the bonds of kindred would be strengthened by relations of amity and commerce." The chairman concluded a speech highly complimentary to England, with the remark that the British throne rested now on a firmer basis than before, since it was filled by a lady whose feminine graces and virtues would rally round her all that was manly, chivalrous, and noble.

The toast was drunk with an enthusiasm that could not but be very gratifying to a wanderer in "a far countree." In reply to the honour, I expressed my gratification, as a Briton, at finding that the farther I travelled South, the nearer I seemed to be to congenial sentiments and feelings, and declared my intention, in requital of the respect evinced by Texan citizens for my Sovereign and native land, and the hospitality which had been accorded to myself, to make my countrymen acquainted with Texas and its history, which were either greatly misunderstood or altogether unknown in Europe.

At the close of June, I left Galveston for New Orleans. Just before my departure, I had an interview with the President, who had removed to the island for the benefit of his health. His constitution, he said, was broken, but he would fearlessly persevere in the policy which he had adopted—a policy he believed to be essential to the prosperity and happiness of the Republic. "Tell your rulers," was his concluding observation—"tell your rulers to agree to a liberal treaty with Texas, and she will pursue a commercial system by which trade will be freed from its shackles in the valley of the Mississippi, and the country beyond the Rio Grande." From President Lamar I received an introductory letter to General Hamilton, then on his way to Europe as Commissioner of the loan.

Soon after I arrived at New Orleans, my friends almost hustled me on board a steamer, apprehensive lest I should be clutched in the embraces of Yellow Jack, as the pestilential fever of the southern coast is familiarly called. With the utmost speed of high pressure, I steamed up the monarch of North American rivers to Louisville, in Kentucky; from Kentucky I went to Cincinnati, in Ohio; thence to Wheeling, in Virginia; thence "right slick away," in a break-neck stage, with "go-ahead"

drivers, over the Alleghany Mountains. Baltimore, with its social amenities, welcomed me as to a home, and I obtained the traveller's luxury of a willing listener to my yarns, in the person of Mr. Hudson, British Secretary of Legation at Washington, whose multiplied kindnesses I shall not readily forget. With Mr. Hudson I re-visited the Federal Capital, submitted my Texan documents and free-trade views to the acute judgment of Mr. Fox, bade adieu to divers friends on the route from Washington to New York, remained for a brief period in that bustling city, and "finally" took the last look of American land on board a liner, which in twenty-two days all but deposited me on the quays of Liverpool, in the "fall" of 1839.

From the time of my arrival in England to the date of the treaty by which Texas was recognised, and commercial relations established between the young Republic and this country, I omitted no occasion, public or private, of redeeming the pledge which I had given in Texas.* A letter, published

* Explanation of Texan affairs was no easy nor encouraging task; some asking if the people were Indians, others if they were Spaniards, and others apparently suspicious that I had established advantageous relations with the "land-pirates,"—and hence my zeal. A veteran member of Parliament asked if Texas were not a state lying contiguous to Florida.

in the autumn of 1839, and signed "Daniel O'Connell," led to a controversy in which, at the risk of undergoing a considerable infliction of vituperative language, I succeeded in exposing to the British public the nature of suggestions calculated to lead to a course of mischievous folly. Mr. O'Connell's letter, a curiosity in its way, pledged him to bring forward the following motions in the ensuing session of Parliament:—

"1. That it is the opinion of this house, that Her Majesty's Ministers ought not to advise Her Majesty to recognise the independence, as a state, of the persons located on part of the territories of the Republic of Mexico, with which Republic we are in alliance, and who have called themselves the State of Texas, unless with the assent of the said Republic of Mexico; and also, unless such alleged State of Texas shall make the abolition of negro slavery a fundamental law, and also consent that the slave-trade shall be deemed and treated as piracy.

"2. That an address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly praying that she may be pleased to give directions to her Ministers to endeavour to make such an arrangement with the government of Mexico as would place at their disposal such a portion of the unoccupied territory of that Republic, on

or near its northern boundary, as should be sufficient for the purpose of establishing an asylum, or free state of persons of colour, Her Majesty's subjects, who may be desirous to emigrate to and establish such free state."

On these motions there has been, as the Americans say, no "legislative action;" neither has their framer proceeded, according to his doctrine of right, to agitate for the impeachment of the Foreign Minister, which, by the way, seems to be a favourite project with certain flighty politicians now-a-days. Another motion has been held in abeyance by Mr. O'Connell, to be brought forward on the production of the Texan treaty. If, like those already quoted, it contain the germ of war with the United States, the least Parliament can demand from the honourable, learned, and absolute gentleman, before consenting to gratify his humour, is a guarantee that, in the event of England plunging into hostilities with her best foreign customer and most formidable opponent, he will not whistle off his legions, in the heat of the conflict, and leave her to fight it out as she can.

Whatever Mr. O'Connell's motives may be for endeavouring to embroil England and the United States, one thing is certain, that his conduct operates

very injuriously on the interests of his poor Catholic fellow-countrymen in America. These form a population by no means desired (now that labour is abundant) by the citizens. Unlike the Protestant emigrants from Ireland, they constantly interfere in local politics and elections, acting together as one man, and swayed by considerations peculiar to themselves. They are, besides, a frequent charge upon the benevolence of the country, which has to provide relief for their sick and destitute. For instance, I find by published returns, that, in a period of about eight years, ending in July, 1838, the number of Irish patients admitted into the Charity Hospital of the city of New Orleans was above 12,000; exceeding the aggregate number of patients from every State in the Union. When all these matters are weighed, it will not be deemed extraordinary that societies should be formed for excluding foreign settlers in the States from the benefits of naturalization. These have been organized in New Orleans and elsewhere, under the name of "Native American Associations."

A war between England and the United States would be one of the greatest calamities that could befal either. Were the American character and the *working* of the American institutions thoroughly

understood, diplomatic arrangements with the government of the United States would be greatly simplified. But, notwithstanding the accumulation of travels and authorities, European ideas of the people are extremely vague, and it is only with the *theory* of their institutions, so admirably expounded by de Tocqueville, that they are yet conversant. Nothing, for example, is more provoking to the methodical publicists of ancient monarchies than the centrifugal tendencies of the individual States, each of which may apparently draw the whole confederacy into aggressive war, contrary to justice and reason. International law they conclude to be of no avail with such eccentric bodies. In a gust of impatience, they are for excluding them *in toto* from the pale of recognised communities. But, as the most vagrant member of the cometary system is not less under the control of immutable laws than the most abiding star of the firmament, so are these sub-imperial sovereignties regulated by principles which define and determine their movements and action, although those principles are difficult to be comprehended by persons planted on a political antipodes.

It is a curious fact, that the politicians of the United States charge Great Britain with indirect

aggrandizement, by means of trading companies, just as the Americans are accused of trying to shuffle themselves into territory by the operation of their complicated machinery of State and Federal Government. In a report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives in Congress, dated January 4th, 1839, on the subject of the Oregon territory, the organization of the Hudson's Bay Company is described as resembling that of the East India Company in Hindostan, at the period of its early conquests. "Individual traders and ordinary commercial companies cannot stand against it. They cannot compete in resources with this great Empire-Corporation. Besides which, a powerful incorporated Company, like this, having exclusive privileges of trade by charter, and those privileges conveying *territory* as appurtenant to trade—a monster and an anomaly in its nature as it is—such a Company is in itself, to all intents and purposes, a territorial government.

"Experience has shown the necessity of military posts among the Indians. The Company accordingly has its great post and its lesser forts, all of them British military posts in fact, but with the peculiarity that its flag not being the Queen's flag, the Government is enabled to pursue

the disingenuous course of claiming rights and territory in virtue of acts performed by it, while, in the same breath, disavowing all Government responsibility for those acts. But the United States has no military post there. It has no gigantic company, like that of Hudson's Bay, to be put forward to act the ambiguous and insidious part of a government, or of private individuals, as the policy of state may render most convenient. If it establishes a post, it must do so openly and above-board, in its own name. But this Great Britain objects to; so that still the monopoly of trade and of civil and military power shall be held by her *indirectly*, through the means of the Hudson's Bay Company.

"The Committee are of opinion that this ground of distinction ought to be no longer admitted by the United States. So long as Great Britain takes to herself the fruits of the operations of these Empire-Corporations, and the millions of subjects they conquer, and the vast realms they subdue, are governed and held for her advantage, she ought not to be permitted to set up any distinction, in her dealings with a foreign state, between their acts and hers. So far as regards the rights or the safety of that foreign state, a military post established by the East India Company, or the Hudson's Bay Company, is

a military post established by Great Britain. Not to perceive this, is to shut our eyes to the system of operations by means of which Great Britain has built up the stupendous fabric of her power in the East and the West."

English people will perceive by the foregoing that complaints of encroachment are not all on one side. Mother and daughter seem to be pretty much alike in their love of dominion. Let us hope that, as more than half the globe is yet before them for apportionment, they will postpone their quarrel about minute appropriations until they have come to the last slice; and then, perhaps, may arise some diplomatic umpire who will prevail upon them to settle patrimonial differences by transferring the ultimate section of "disputed territory" to some promising great-grand-daughter of patriarchal England.

It can serve no useful purpose for Britain and the United States to go to war, and it is only in the misapprehension of each other's true position and interests that they will do so. And as they are of the same original stock, it would not only be more politic, but in better taste, to substitute reciprocity of trade for reciprocity of abuse. Newspaper paragraphs and angry declamation, whether in the hall or on the "stump," will not overturn the Monarchy,

or dismember the Republic. Instead of burning towns and cutting throats, let Americans and Britons emulate each other in the arts of good government and industry, and the authorities, Presidential and Regal, "go a-head" with all their energy to parade the largest number of virtuous, enlightened, and contented citizens, for the inspection of Wisdom and Benevolence, on the day when they distribute their prize medals to the benefactors of mankind.

If any of my countrymen, having dozed for the last half century, are, between sleeping and waking, venting their wrath against "Yankee rebels," and wondering why our Whig government do not spit them *en masse*, like cockchafers, I recommend them (after taking a refrigerant) to read what is recorded in the following pages, of a people who have grown up since they retired to "the pleasant land of drowsy-head"—a people whom their European Historiographer calls "Texans," but upon whom the leader of "hereditary bondsmen," and those who sail in his wake, have bestowed a variety of appellations more familiar to the readers of the Criminal Calendar than to the admirers of polite literature. After perusing the said pages, the sleepers awakened will infinitely oblige me by revealing

their candid opinion of these Texans—who, they will perceive, are only off-shoots from the "Yankees"—my own idea being that their growth as a community, their establishment and sustentation of a constitutional government, and their endeavours, by means of that government, to raise in the wilderness the rarests monument of civilization, constitute one of the most remarkable passages in the history of associated man.



TEXAS:

THE

RISE, PROGRESS, AND PROSPECTS

OF THE

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS.

BOOK I.

GEOGRAPHY, NATURAL HISTORY, AND TOPOGRAPHY OF TEXAS.

"Know'st thou the land where the lemon-trees bloom—
Where the gold orange glows mid' the deep thicket's gloom,
Where a wind, ever soft, from the blue heaven blows,
And the groves are of laurel, and myrtle, and rose!"

GOETHE's *Wilhelm Meister*.

CHAPTER I.

Position of Texas as a Mexican Province—Extent, Territorial Distribution and Political Divisions of Mexico, under the Government of Spain—States and Territories of the Mexican Republic—Coahuila and Texas—Population of Mexico—Boundaries and Subdivisions of Texas Proper—Present Boundaries of the Republic — Natural Divisions of Texas — Remarkable Contrast between the Border sections and the lands of the Interior.

Texas, previous to attaining the rank of an independent state, formed an outlying section of the Mexican Republic, which republic, embracing the territory formerly comprised in the vice-royalty of New Spain, was bounded, to the east and south-east, by the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean sea; to the west, by the Pacific ocean; to the south, by Guatemala; and to the north, by the States of the Anglo-American Union.

The territorial extent of Mexico has been estimated by Humboldt at 118,478 square leagues, of 25 to the degree; of which 82,000 are situated under the temperate, and 36,500 under the torrid, zone. This estimate does not include a large, but almost unknown, territory lying between the northern extremity of New Mexico and Sonora, and the boundary line of the United States.

At the close of the last century, and before the administration of affairs introduced by Don Jose de Galvez, the able minister of "the Indies," New Spain contained the following divisions:—1. The

Kingdom of Mexico; 2. The Kingdom of New Gallicia; 3. The Kingdom of New Leon; 4. The Colony of New Santander; 5. The Province of Texas; 6. The Province of Coahuila (or Cohahuila); 7. The Province of New Biscay; 8. The Province of Sonora; 9. The Province of New Mexico; 10. The Provinces of Old and New (Lower and Upper) California.

At the beginning of the present century, Mexico was divided into twelve Intendancics and three Provinces. The Intendancy of San Luis Potosi, in the region of the north-east, comprehended the province of Texas, the colonies of New Santander and Coahuila, the kingdom of New Leon, and the districts of Charcas, Altamira, Catorce and Ramos; which districts constituted the Intendancy of San Luis Potosi, properly so called. "The Intendancy of San Luis," observes Baron Humboldt, "includes, besides the province of Potosi, all that goes under the denomination of '*Provincias Internas Orientales*' (the Eastern Provinces of the Interior). A single Intendant is, consequently, at the head of an administration which includes a greater surface than all European Spain. But this immense country, gifted by nature with the most precious productions, and situated under a serene sky, in the temperate zone, towards the borders of the tropic, is, for the greatest part, a wild desert, still more thinly peopled than the governments of Asiatic Russia. The position of the eastern limits of New Spain, the proximity of the United States, the frequency of communication with the colonists of Louisiana, with a great number of circumstances which I shall not here develop,

will probably favour the progress of civilization and prosperity in these vast and fertile regions."

There is another division of Mexico given by Humboldt — the "Maritime and Commercial" — which will one day possess great political interest, when the coasts shall become more populous, when the cultivation of the soil shall be less concentrated on the table-land, and when the maritime provinces on the Pacific shall avail themselves of the advantages offered by their ports for the commerce of Asia and the north-west. This division includes,— 1. The PROVINCES OF THE INTERIOR, which do not extend to the ocean; viz., New Mexico, New Biscay, Zacatecas, Guanaxuato. 2. The MARITIME PROVINCES OF THE EASTERN COAST, opposite to Europe; viz., San Luis Potosi, Vera Cruz, Merida, or Yucatan. The MARITIME PROVINCES OF THE WESTERN COAST, opposite to Asia; viz., New, or Upper, California, Old, or Lower, California, Sonora, Guadalaxara, Valladolid, Mexico Proper, Puebla, Oaxaca.

By the Constitution of the Mexican United States, adopted in 1824, the Republic was divided into a Federation of States, Territories, and a Federal District. The parts of the Federation were thus distributed:—States, nineteen in number, commencing with the Peninsula of Yucatan to the south, or Merida to the east; Tabasco, Las Chiapas, and Oaxaca to the south and west; towards the north these were succeeded by Vera Cruz, Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosi, New Leon, Coahuila and Texas, comprehending the whole territory on the Atlantic side, as far as the frontiers of the United States; La Puebla, Mexico, Michoacan, Zalisco, Sonora, and Sinaloa,

whose western extremities border on the Pacific; Queretaro, Guanaxuato, Zacatecas, Durango, and Chihuahua, which occupy the central region and extend between the two oceans. The Territories comprised Tlaxcala, with the Californias and Colima, on the western coast, and the inland district of Santa Fé of New Mexico.

The State of Coahuila and Texas comprehended the same extent of territory which constituted the provinces so called before their union as a member of the Federation. The annexation of Texas to Coahuila was provisional merely; the former being entitled to dissolve the connexion whenever it possessed the population and resources requisite for the formation of a constitutional unity. At the period of their federal organization, the joint population of Coahuila and Texas probably did not exceed 100,000 souls. The population of the Intendancy of San Luis Potosi amounted, in 1803, to little more than 300,000.

According to the calculations of Humboldt, the whole population of New Spain amounted, in 1803, to 5,832,100, of whom 6,100 only were African negroes. Mr. C. J. Latrobe, who visited Mexico in 1834, thus classifies and enumerates its inhabitants at that period:—

The population of New Spain consists of seven distinct classes, besides people of recent Asiatic origin:—

1. The Gachupin (or Chapetone), the full-blood European, or, more properly, the Spaniard, whose numbers now are very inconsiderable, having dwindled down, since the Revolution,

from 80,000 to probably not more than 10,000.

2. Creoles, of European extraction, 1,000,000.
3. Mestizoes, the offspring of Europeans and Indians, 2,000,000.
4. Mulattoes, the offspring of Europeans and negroes, 400,000.
5. Aboriginal Indians, numbering from three to four millions.
6. African negroes and their descendants, 100,000.
7. Zamboes, the offspring of negroes and Indians, 2,000,000.

To these about 15,000 mixed European residents are to be added.

Deducting half a million from the (as I conceive) exaggerated estimate of the seventh class, and allowing a larger proportion to the European creoles, whom Humboldt, in 1803, estimated at more than a million, the aggregate population of Mexico, at the present day, may be computed at between nine and ten millions.

In 1834, Colonel Juan N. Almonte (since secretary of war in Mexico), by commission from the general government of Mexico, visited Texas, and drew up a statistical report of the country, to which, as an official Mexican authority, I shall occasionally refer. According to this report, the section of the Mexican Republic, which may now be distinguished as Texas Proper, is situated between 28° and 35° north latitude, and 17° to 25° longitude west of Washington; bounded on the north by the Territory of Arkansas; east, by the State of Louisiana; south, by the Gulf of Mexico and the State

of Tamaulipas; and on the west, by Coahuila, Chihuahua, and the Territory of New Mexico. Colonel Almonte was informed by the State government of Coahuila and Texas, that, instead of the River de las Nueces, as was generally supposed, and as then appeared on the map, forming the boundary between Coahuila and Texas, this assumption was founded on a geographical error. The true limit ought, it was alleged, to commence at the *embouchure* of the river Aransaso, and follow to its source, continuing thence, in a direct line, until it reached the junction of the Medina and San Antonio rivers; from which it ought to proceed along the eastern bank of the Medina towards its source, and terminate on the borders of Chihuahua. Mrs. Holley, in her work on Texas, states that the boundaries of Texas Proper are,—on the north, the Red River, separating it from Arkansas; on the south, the Gulf of Mexico; on the east, the Sabine River and Louisiana; on the west, the River Nueces, separating it from Tamaulipas and Coahuila. The territory comprised within these limits Mrs. Holley estimates at nearly 200,000 square miles—a surface almost as extensive as that of France. But these vague authorities are now obsolete, with regard to the limits of Texas, which, no longer politically united to Mexico, has claimed for itself new, more ample, and more natural boundaries, in the character of an independent Republic.

By a preliminary article of the constitutional act adopted at Saltillo, 11th March, 1827, the constituent congress of Coahuila and Texas divided the territory of the state "for its better administration"

into three departments: Bexar (pronounced *Béhar*), under which name was included the whole of the former province of Texas,—Monclova commensurate with the Coahuilan district thus designated, and Rio Grande Saltillo, embracing the district so entitled, and that of Parras.

Texas itself was subdivided into three political jurisdictions; Bexar (proper), the Brazos, and Nacogdoches. The boundary of the provincial department of Bexar, towards Coahuila, corresponded with that of the province of Texas—its dividing line with the Brazos commenced at the mouth of the river La Baca, and stretched along its western bank towards the southern limit of what was Green de Witt's colony; leaving the river, it followed the said limit towards the west, until it passed the river Guadalupe; returning towards the north-west, it followed the western limit of De Witt's colony to the road which passes from Bexar to Nacogdoches, and, taking from that point a northerly direction, it terminated in the Red River of Natchitoches (*Rio Roxo de Natchitoches*).

The department of the Brazos, situated as above mentioned with relation to Bexar, was bounded, towards the district of Nacogdoches, by a line commencing at Cape Bolivar, bay of Galveston, and running, between north and west, through the interval which separates the rivers San Jacinto and Trinidad, along the heights that separate the waters of the said rivers to the source of the San Jacinto, thence along the ridge which divides the rivers Brazos and Trinidad towards the source of the

latter, terminating northward of the said source in the Red River of Natchitoches.

The department of Nacogdoches was bounded on the north by the Red River, east by the Sabine, south by the Gulf of Mexico, and west by the district of the Brazos, according to its previously defined limits. These three departments and the north-western section of the province, were topographically distinguished by the location of the Mexican "colonial grants," which will be hereafter noticed in explaining the "Empresario" system.

The chief towns of the state of Coahuila and Texas were Monclova, Saltillo (called also Leona de Vicario) in Coahuila, and San Antonio de Bexar, the capital of the district of Bexar, in Texas.

The present boundary of Texas, as claimed by the Republic, is specified in a short Act of Congress approved by President Houston, December 19, 1836, which runs thus:—"*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Texas in Congress assembled,* That, from and after the passing of this act, the civil and political jurisdiction of this Republic be, and is hereby declared to extend to the following boundaries; to wit:—Beginning at the mouth of the Sabine river, and running west along the Gulf of Mexico, three leagues from land, to the mouth of the Rio Grande, thence up the principal stream of said river to its source, thence due north to the forty-second degree of north latitude, thence along the boundary line as defined in the treaty between the United States and Spain, to the beginning: and that the President be, and is hereby

authorised and required to open a negotiation with the government of the United States of America, so soon as, in his opinion, the public interest requires it to ascertain and define the boundary line as agreed upon in the said treaty." Power was vested in the President of Texas, by an act passed 12th June 1837, to appoint a commissioner to co-operate with one to be named by the government of the United States, for the purpose of running and marking the boundary line between the two countries, "from latitude 32° north on the Sabine river, to the Rio Roxo or Red River," according to the treaty of 22d February, 1819, between the United States and Spain. A convention, with this view, concluded between the United States and Texas at Washington, on the 25th April, 1838, having been ratified by both governments, an act was passed by the Texan Congress, 23rd November, 1839, repealing the law of June 1837, and providing funds for carrying the object of the convention into effect. Commissioners duly appointed commenced the execution of the duty assigned them in the spring of 1840. The following is the line of demarcation provided by the treaty of limits agreed upon by Spain and the United States in 1819:—

Beginning at the mouth of the river Sabine, on the Gulf of Mexico, following the course of the said river to the 32° of north latitude; the eastern bank and all the islands in the river to belong to the United States, and the western bank to Spain; thence, by a line due north, to the northernmost part of the 33° of latitude, and until it strikes the Red River; thence, following the course of the said river, to the northernmost point of the bend between

longitude 101° and 102°, by the shortest line to the southernmost point of the bend of the river Arkansas, between the same degrees of longitude, 101° and 102°; thence, following the course of the river Arkansas, to its source; thence, due north, following the 42nd parallel of latitude to the South Sea.—The treaty conceded to the subjects of Spain the right of navigating the Red River and the Arkansas, to their mouths in the Mississippi, and the latter river and the Sabine to the sea.

The treaty of 1819 between the United States and Spain was recognised and confirmed by a treaty of limits between Mexico and the United States, concluded on the 12th of January, 1828, and a convention was subsequently entered into for surveying and settling the boundary line, but, in consequence of delay on the part of Mexico, her civil dissensions, and the revolution in Texas, the stipulations of the convention were never carried into execution.

Within the limits of the Republic of Texas, as defined by the Boundary Act of December 19, 1836, are included parts of Tamaulipas, Coahuila, and New Mexico. The section of country between the river de las Nueces and the Rio Grande is a valuable tract of land, whereas the Mexican side of the latter river, comprehending part of Tamaulipas, New Leon, Coahuila, and Durango, is, with the exception of a few favoured spots, destitute of wood and water, rocky, and incapable of improvement. The mountainous tract called the Bolson de Mapimi, comprising more than 3000 square leagues, and indented into the territory of Durango and Coahuila, is a desert, uninhabited save by tribes of roving and

independent Indians. New Mexico, or the Santa Fé Territory, extends along the Rio Grande from the 31° to the 38° of north latitude. This territory is fertile, but very thinly inhabited, and exposed to the predatory incursions of the Indians. It contains three towns, Santa Fé, Taos, and Albuquerque, besides a number of villages. It is to be remarked that the title of the Republic of Texas to lands extraneous to the boundaries of the state at the period of the revolution, has yet to be formally perfected, by treaty with Mexico. For all practical purposes, however, the limits have been determined by the act of the Texan Congress in 1836.

The course of the rivers of Texas, which run nearly parallel to each other, indicates the general surface of the country to be an inclined plane, sloping toward the south-east.

The extent of coast from the river Sabine to the Rio Grande, which constitute the extreme points of the maritime limits claimed by the Republic, is about 400 miles.

The soil of Texas presents three distinct natural aspects, by which it is divisible into a corresponding number of regions, or districts; the plain, or level, the undulating, or rolling, and the mountainous or hilly.

THE LEVEL REGION extends along the whole coast, from the Sabine to the Rio Grande; commencing with an average breadth of thirty miles, and increasing to seventy between the Sabine and the San Jacinto, it expands at the centre on the Colorado, to one hundred, then gradually diminishes towards the Nueces. To this region succeeds

the rolling country of the interior, which stretches westward and northward to the hilly tract, distant from 150 to 200 miles from the low, level lands.

The surface of Eastern Texas may be included in two divisions—the level and the undulating—the hills being few and of slight elevation. Proceeding along the course of the mountains and across them, we reach immense plains, which extend to the confines of New Mexico and Chihuahua, and away to the north and north-west, beyond the Red River and Arkansas.

In passing through the low lands from the United States, the country to the north and west of Lake Sabine is flat and woody; on the south-west, between Lake Sabine and Galveston Bay, it is a dull and generally barren prairie, destitute of trees, except on the margin of the water-courses. Beyond the north-east point of Galveston, the landscape improves, and a large extent of gently-sloping prairie, agreeably diversified by skirts of timber, spreads across the woody bottom of the Trinity River, save in the immediate vicinity of Galveston, where the prairie is mostly wet and steril. There are some fine rolling lands on the river San Jacinto and Buffalo Bayou; from Galveston Bay to the Brazos river, it is one unbroken plain, rather low and sandy, on the coast, but relieved, towards the interior, by insulated groves and timbered streams. From the east side of the broad "bottom," or alluvion, of the Brazos, to the west side of Caney Creek, it is, for the most part, woody, interspersed with large cane-brakes; on the north side of this section, down the west bank of the Brazos, the prairie opens as far as a point at the town of Columbia.

A rich and magnificent prairie, uninterrupted save by clumps and skirts of timber on the streams, extends on both sides of the Colorado, from Caney Creek to the Navidad River. Advancing west of the Navidad, the soil is a light sandy prairie, sloping towards the north and west, and, to the south and south-east, a continuous level. The shores of Matagorda, Aransaso, Espiritu Santo, and Nueces Bays, are higher than the margins of the bays lying farther eastward, and the rivers which there discharge their waters into the gulf invite the stranger in search of a fertile settlement to journey inland, where he is certain to obtain the fulfilment of his hopes and wishes.

The prevailing character of the soil of the level region of Texas is a rich alluvion—singularly free from those accumulations of stagnant water, which, combined with a burning sun and exuberant vegetation, render a large proportion of the southern parts of the United States little better than a sickly desert. The porous character of the soil, the gradual elevation of the level lands towards the interior, and the general rise of the banks from the beds of the streams, preclude the formation of swamps to any injurious extent.

THE ROLLING, OR UNDULATING, REGION forms the largest of the natural divisions of Texas. North and north-west of the level section lying between the Sabine and San Jacinto rivers, the country undulates towards the Red River. The thickly timbered lands extend quite to the Red River, and as far to the west as a line drawn due north, from the heads of the Sabine. A wide belt of rolling and thinly wooded

prairie extends westward of this line along the margin of the Red River.

The country rises in gentle and beautiful undulations above the alluvial region of the Brazos, Colorado, and Guadalupe, extending in a north-westerly direction up those rivers, from 150 to 200 miles, as far as the hilly district. Here is a delightful variety of fertile prairie and valuable woodland, enriched with springs, and rivulets of pure and sparkling water, which, like the larger streams, are invariably bordered by wooded "bottoms" The undulations often swell at lengthened intervals into eminences of soft acclivity, from the summits of which the eye may repose on some of the fairest scenes in nature.

The rolling lands between the Guadalupe and Nueces sweep towards the north-west, with an elevation gradually increasing, until they terminate in the high land range, at a distance of about 200 miles from the level region of the coast. Timber and water are not so abundant in this section as in the country lying further east, but it affords excellent pasturage, and is peculiarly adapted to the raising of all kinds of stock.

The Mountainous Region forms part of the Sierra Màdre, that great chain which, broken at the junction of the rivers Puerco and Rio Grande, and taking a north-easterly course, enters Texas Proper, at the sources of the river Nueces. Continuing thence, in the same direction, to the head waters of the San Saba, a tributary of the Colorado, and inclining eastward down the San Saba, it crosses the Colorado, and is finally lost in the woodlands of

the Upper Brazos, between the river of which name and the Sabine the country is rolling or level. Spurs of this mountain range project southwardly down the rivers Medina and Guadalupe, to the vicinity of San Antonio de Bexar. Other spurs branch down the rivers Llano and Piedernales and the smaller western tributaries of the Colorado, and similar spurs extend to the Colorado above San Saba for a considerable distance, rounding the head waters of the San Andres and Bosque rivers, which flow into the Brazos.

The mountains are of third and fourth magnitude in point of elevation: those of San Saba are deemed the highest. They are clothed with forests of pine, oak, cedar, and other trees, with a great variety of shrubbery. Extensive valleys of alluvial soil wind throughout the range; most of them susceptible of irrigation and profitable culture. The sides of the mountains themselves, with not a few of their summits, are adapted to agriculture. Copious and limpid springs abound in the high lands, fertilising the soil and forming innumerable rivulets which, gliding with a rapid current, unite their waters, until they swell into large and bounteous rivers, that scatter plenty over the central and western districts of the Brazos and Bexar. Of the table lands beyond the mountains, which are said to be healthy and fertile, little is known, and still less of the northern region, extending to the 42° of north latitude.

Edwards in his history of Texas, calculates that east of the Trinity river one-third of the land is fit for the plough, between the Trinity and Colorado

one-half, and west of the Colorado one-fourth. These proportions, though in the main conjectural, afford a fair estimate of the relative agricultural capacities of the several districts.

The section of country lying between the Nueces and Rio Grande has been little explored for settlement. At the close of 1833, and during the two subsequent years, emigrants were placed by a New York Land Company, under an Empresario grant, at a settlement called Dolores on the Rio Grande. The report of Mr. Egerton, the company's surveyor, to which I shall have occasion to refer hereafter, represents the banks of the Rio Grande as well adapted to farming; and describes the whole country between that river and the Medina, as not to be surpassed for the raising of stock. The land is flat, and rich in pasturage, but rather deficient in water, there being no considerable streams between the Nueces and the Rio Grande.

Such are the general features of Texas, the first appearance of which is unfavourable, from whatever point it may be approached. If by sea, a low sandy beach, backed by wet and level prairies, offers few inducements to the agricultural settler. If by the Rio Grande, it wears an aspect of aridity; and if by Louisiana and Red River, it breaks upon the observer as a poor upland district, overrun with wood, with a weak soil of alternate sand and clay. But, after traversing the borders and advancing towards the interior, the scene is entirely changed. Then this singular country exhibits its beauties and develops its resources. In the rolling and hilly sections, the grazier and cultivator of the products

familiar to the European farmer may obtain easy and ample returns from plains and valleys unrivalled for natural attractions: and on the low line of the coast, the enterprize of the southern planter will be prodigally rewarded by the vegetable treasures of a tropical clime. To the settler who desires to enjoy the advantages of the upper region without fixing his residence remote from the sea, the western coast of Texas, with its sparkling streams flowing through a fertile and picturesque country, until they blend with the blue waves of the gulf, is more suitable than the eastern. But it is the peculiar charm of Texas, that it offers to the most dissimilar tastes and habits the means of selecting a " place of rest" in some congenial spot.

Towards the northern limits of the Republic of Texas extends the territory of Upper California, which, blessed with the greatest fertility, and capable of sustaining a population of five-and-twenty millions, is almost a waste, inhabited only by a few thousand free settlers and Indian converts at the Franciscan Missions, in addition to a number of wretched and thinly scattered native tribes.

CHAPTER II.

General character of the Sea-coast on the Gulf of Mexico—The Coast of Texas until lately almost unknown to Navigators—Sand-bars, Islets, and Lagoons—Alluvial Accumulations and Encroachments of the Land on the Gulf—Sabine Bay and its Tributaries—Red River of Natchitoches—Galveston Bay and its Tributaries—San Luis Harbour—Brazos River and its Tributaries—San Bernard and Old Caney—The Bays of Matagorda, La Baca, Espiritu Santo, Aransas and Corpus Christi, with their Tributaries—Laguna del Madre—Rio Grande del Norte—Fresh Water Lakes and Ponds—Sudden Disappearance of small Streams—Average Supply of Water—Difference between the Rivers on the Eastern side and those Westward of the Rocky Mountains.

THE sea-coast of Texas, until settlers from the United States attracted commerce to the country, was almost unfrequented by mariners. "The Intendancy of San Luis," says Humboldt, "comprehends more than 230 leagues of sea coast, but without commerce, and without activity, with the exception of a few small vessels which come from the West Indies to lay in provisions, either at the bar of Tampico near Panuco, or at the anchorage of New Santander. That part which extends from the mouth of the Rio Grande del Norte to the River Sabine is almost still unknown, and has never been examined by navigators. It would be of great importance, however, to discover a good port on this northern extremity of the Gulf of Mexico. Unfortunately, the eastern coast of New Spain offers every where the same obstacles—a want of depth for ves-

sels drawing more than twelve feet six inches of water—bars at the mouths of the rivers—necks of land and long islets, of which the direction is parallel to that of the continent. The shore of the provinces of New Santander and Texas, from the 21° to the 29° of latitude, is singularly festooned, and presents a succession of interior basins, some of them completely shut in, others communicating by several channels with the ocean. The latter are of great advantage to the coasting trade, as coasting vessels are there secure from the great swells of the ocean. It would be interesting for geology to examine if these *lagunas* have been formed by currents penetrating far into the country, by irruptions, or if those long and narrow islets, ranged parallel to the coast, are bars which have gradually risen above the mean level of the waters."

On the Atlantic side, the commerce of New Spain has two main openings—Vera Cruz and Tampico. The port of Vera Cruz, according to the same authority, is merely "a bad anchorage among shallows." Tampico is safer for shipping, although the bar prevents the entry of vessels drawing more than a light depth of water. "The coast of Mexico, along the gulf, may be considered as a dyke, against which the trade winds and perpetual motion of the waves from east to west, throw up the sands which the agitated ocean carries along. The sands heaped up by the vortices of the waters from the peninsula of Yucatan to the mouths of the Rio Grande and the Mississippi, miserably contract the basin of the Mexican gulf. The rivers which descend from the Sierra Madre, and enter the Atlantic ocean, have,

in no small degree, contributed to increase the sand banks. The coast of New Spain, from 18° of latitude (the parallel of Vera Cruz) to 26° (the parallel of the Rio Grande), abounds with bars, and vessels which draw more than twelve feet and a half water cannot pass without danger of grounding."

From the Sabine River to the Nueces the coast in general is even and uniform, and easily run by the soundings. The bars at the mouths of the rivers are formed of shifting sands, which are subject to much change, according to the wind. There are numerous bays, lagoons, and openings of rivers, along the whole coast, capable of being navigated by vessels that can cross the bars, which are covered with a depth of water ranging from three to twelve feet and above, in different localities.

On Oyster Creek, about two miles from the mouth of the Brazos, on both sides of the Brazos, the St. Bernard, Caney, and the Colorado, an abundance of timber may always be procured, consisting of cedar, cypress, cotton wood, elm, ash, live oak, black oak, post oak, &c.; and in addition to this, on the whole line of coast, are immense quantities of drift-wood, furnishing a never-failing supply of fuel, and offering an inducement to the introduction of steam navigation upon rivers better adapted to that mode of communication than for sailing vessels, in consequence of the bars at their entrance.

On the eastern coast of Texas there is an immense deposit of the finest sand, with a profusion of small marine shells, and it is apparent that from the accumulations of the numerous rivers and creeks, especially during their periodical swells, arises the

original formation of the bars, by which additions are afterwards made to the land. Hence the coast may be said to be gaining on the gulf, and although many years must elapse before any decided change is effected in the general features of the country, yet it is certain that the gradual encroachments will eventually produce material alteration, as well in the mouths of the rivers, as in the present aspect and configuration of the coast. To the operation of like causes, geologists are warranted in attributing the formation of the vast alluvial basin of the Mississippi.

Beginning at the Sabine, and proceeding in a south-westerly line along the coast, the bays of Texas are, Sabine, Galveston, Matagorda, La Baca, Espiritu Santo, Aransaso and Copano, Corpus Christi and Nueces, with the Barra de Santiago. The anchorage is generally good, and as the water shoals gradually, vessels approaching the coast may be guided by the lead.

Enumerating them in a similar order, from the north-eastern frontier, the principal rivers are the Red River, Sabine, Neches, Trinity, Brazos de Dios, Colorado, Guadalupe, San Antonio, Nueces, Rio Grande del Norte. At a short distance from their mouths, the majority are narrow and deep, with steep and shelving banks. They are liable at some points to overflow, but the waters usually recede within the banks early in the spring. The land invariably ascends from the water-courses, and thus precludes the formation of unwholesome swamps and pools.

SABINE BAY AND ITS TRIBUTARIES.

The estuary of the Sabine is a large bay, connected with the gulf by a narrow inlet, with a soft mud bar at the entrance. It has a sufficient depth of water for vessels of ordinary burthen. Its principal tributaries are the Sabine and the Neches rivers, with their branches. The land, which around the bay is low and destitute of timber, is of inferior quality for agriculture, but well adapted to grazing.

Steam-boats have ascended the Sabine to a considerable distance from its mouth. A raft, deemed by some an insuperable obstacle to the navigation, was removed in four weeks, by order of the War Department of the United States. The first attempt to navigate the river by steam was made in 1837, by captains Wright and Delmore in the Velocipede, which ascended as high as Gaines Ferry. The Velocipede was in length 125 feet, in breadth thirty-two feet, and drew six feet of water. In May 1839 a steam-boat plied regularly between the settlements on the river. The Sabine periodically overflows its banks.

The principal tributaries to the Sabine, from the west, are Bevil, Adams, Cypress, Big and Little Cow, Palo Gacho, Patron, Tanaha, and Cherokee creeks.*

The Neches, a river from fifty to seventy yards wide, and from ten to fifteen deep, enters Sabine Bay through a low prairie section, about eighteen miles north of the mouth of the Sabine. It is sub-

* The word "Creek" is misapplied by the Americans to running streams, and frequently to the outlets of lakes.

ject to periodical and extensive overflows. The entrance from the bay over the bar, at the mouth of the river, is about five feet deep. It is supposed to be navigable for small steam-boats, more than one hundred miles. Sloops and schooners of light draft frequently ascend to Beaumont, a settlement on its western bank.

The tributaries of the Neches are Charles Creek —a deep, still stream, seventy-five miles in length, which joins the main stream from the west, about thirty-five miles from the bay—Big Sandy Creek, thirty-five miles in length—Alabama, or Village, Creek, which is navigable for seventy miles—the Angelina, a stream one hundred and seventy miles in length, which enters the Neches from the east. With little improvement, the Angelina might be rendered navigable for steam-boats during the winter season, nearly to the town of Nacogdoches. The Ayish Bayou,* seventy-five miles in length, and the Attoyac, sixty miles in length, enter the Angelina, the former from the east, the latter from the west. The Ayish Bayou is capable of being made navigable for small craft during the winter to the extent of forty miles, as is the Attoyac, for a short distance, during the same period of the year.

Pine Creek is a branch of the Neches from the west, above forty miles in length. Sixty miles above Pine Creek, San Pedro Bayou unites its waters to

* The word *bayou*, borrowed by the Americans from the early settlers of Louisiana, is rather loosely applied in the topography of Texas and the West. In strictness, I believe it means a deep inlet, which affords a channel for the water in time of flood, and remains dry, or nearly so, at other seasons.

the Neches, which might be navigated during winter nearly to this place. Thirty-five miles above the San Pedro, the Neches branches out into a number of small, fertilising streams. It is a pleasant river, of a gentle current, with few obstructions, and seldom overflows its banks.

Taylor's Creek, a small stream which enters Sabine Bay from the west, a few miles above the city of Sabine, is about forty-five miles in length: a canal of four miles would unite it to a branch of East Bay—an arm of the Bay of Galveston.

Red River.

Red River (the *Rio Roxo de Natchitoches* of the Spaniards), which forms the northern boundary of Texas, separating it from Arkansas territory, is said to take its rise in about 104° west longitude, and 35° north latitude, and after an estimated course of 1500 miles through a fertile and picturesque region, receiving the contributions of many subordinate streams, it augments with its turbid waters the majestic volume of the Mississippi, in about 91° west longitude, and 31° north latitude. Since the removal of the Great Raft, which extended 165 miles on the stream,* it affords a navigation of twelve hun-

* The removal of the enormous mass of drift-wood called the "Great Red River Raft" was effected, in 1838, by Captain Henry M. Shreeve, who was employed for that purpose by the Government of the United States. The mechanical ingenuity of Captain Shreeve has wonderfully improved the navigation of the western rivers by removing the sunken trees, which, under the name of "snags" and "sawyers," are noted and formidable obstacles to steam-boat navigation. The boat used for removing the snags was a steamer of the simplest construction, but of such

dred miles, independently of the communications through its tributaries, which, with moderate improvement in their channels, will afford six hundred more. This river derives its name from its waters, which, especially during the vernal and autumnal swells, are of a deep crimson, and transfer the colour to the alluvial deposits on the banks. A large proportion of the immigration into Texas is by the steam-boats on the Red River, the lands on both sides of which are being settled with great rapidity. In the disputed territory between the United States and Texas, along the course of, and near the Red River, a great number of small lakes are dispersed, which probably have been formed by the waters of this stream, forced back by the immense raft which completely blocked up the channel. The largest of these lakes is Caddo, or Soda, Lake, near the south-eastern boundary. The greater part of it is quite shallow, and many trunks of the decaying trees, which formerly grew upon its present bed, still project from its waters, rendering its navigation dangerous. Small steam-boats are almost constantly plying between the shores of this lake and the portion of the Red River below.

Caddo River, a branch of Lake Soda, is about

power that the largest tree, however firmly imbedded, was extracted in a few minutes. Scores of such trees are raised in a single day, with the assistance of a few hands. The expenditure for the removal of the Great Red River Raft, with the cost of constructing a steam snag-boat, to prevent the formation of fresh obstructions, has been above 300,000 dollars. The working of the snag-boat for a necessary term, and other improvements, would occasion a further outlay to the United States of 100,000 dollars.

forty miles in length, and partly navigable by steam-boats. Cypress Bayou, a branch of the Caddo, about thirty-five miles in length, is not navigable.

Sulphur Creek is a branch of the Red River, navigable for steam-boats sixty miles. Bois d'Arc, another branch, is not navigable; Big and Little Washita (or Ouachita) enter Red River about sixty miles above the "Cross Timber." About forty miles west of the *embouchure* of the Big Washita, the boundary line of Texas, which extends along Red River upwards of four hundred miles, crosses that stream, and diverges north to the Arkansas.

No precise information has yet been given to the public respecting the country intervening between the Big Washita and the head waters of the Red River, which is traversed as a hunting ground by the Comanches and other Indian tribes.

A survey and field notes, with other useful manuscript documents, liberally furnished for this work by Mr. Charles Edwards of New York, enable me to throw some additional light on the topography of this little explored region.

Galveston Bay and its Tributaries.

From the Sabine inlet to Galveston inlet is reckoned about sixty miles by the coast.

The Bay of Galveston extends about thirty-five miles from north to south, and from twelve to eighteen miles from east to west. The harbour has a general depth of from eighteen to thirty feet of water, the average depth in the bay being nine or ten feet. About twenty miles above Galveston

Island the bay is intersected by Red Fish Bar, which runs completely across, and over which there is but five or six feet water.

As several vessels have been lost in trying to make the port of Galveston, (and among them the British ship "Virginia," in the spring of 1840,) although it is by no means difficult of access, I quote, for the guidance of mariners, the following extract from a letter, published in the summer of 1839, by Mr. George Simpton, pilot of Galveston. Mr. Simpton, who is a native of England, and has served in the British Navy, thoroughly understands his duties, as has been testified by the declaration of the principal officers of the United States' war schooner "Grampus," which vessel he piloted into, and out of, Galveston, in October, 1838.

"Our country is so little known even in the United States, that many erroneous rumours are obtaining circulation in almost all their north-eastern ports respecting Galveston bar and harbour.

"In the first place: it may be approached with *less danger than any port in the United States*, as the whole line of coast west of the Sabine, in *five fathoms of water*, is the best of holding ground—and a vessel may ride with perfect safety throughout the year, so that masters of vessels bound to Galveston, having good ground tackling, need not be apprehensive of a lee-shore—that seeming to be their principal object of alarm.

"As both the latitude and longitude of the east end of Galveston Island, laid down on charts and books of directions, are incorrect, and, in consequence, many vessels have run to the westward of this port,

by the error in longitude, and the prevailing westerly current, the following is the correct latitude:—29° 16′ 37″ north; 94° 49′ 41″ west longitude.

"My statement of the latitude and longitude is gathered from the best sources, as I am indebted to many officers of well-known reputation in the Navy, as well as commanders of trading vessels, for their kind assistance, both by observations and chronometers. Masters of vessels may, therefore, lay aside all doubts and fears.

"Galveston has, heretofore, on account of its being low land, been found difficult to make; but now that we have upwards of three hundred houses, many of them so lofty that, from the mast-head of a vessel, they may be distinctly seen at a distance of twenty miles, it is easily made. Vessels, however, of heavy draught should not approach the bar nearer than *six* fathoms—and then, by making a signal for a pilot, they will be promptly attended to. Vessels making this port at night would do well to come to an anchor till daylight. For the convenience of obtaining a pilot, vessels, drawing eight feet or less, may approach as near as *four* fathoms of water.

"I do not hesitate to say, that a vessel, once anchored in Galveston harbour, is as safe as in any harbour in the United States.

"Masters of vessels are particularly requested, on sighting the city, if to the eastward, and it bearing a little to the southward of west-south-west, immediately to haul off to six fathoms, the town bearing south-west by west. They will then be in a fair way for the bar. If to the westward, run to the eastward until the town bears as above.

"In conclusion, let me remark that we have now a first-rate pilot-boat constantly on the look-out for vessels nearing land."

At the *highest Spring tides*, not more than thirteen feet and a half depth of water has been found on the bar of Galveston, and but ten feet at low water. Mr. Simpton, in correction of misrepresentations on the subject, has stated that at no time has he found above twelve and a half feet, and this depth only at high spring tide.

The prevention of the prohibited slave trade and the defence of the coast may be efficiently provided for by stationing an active naval force at Galveston. As a harbour, Galveston is much superior to New Orleans. The depth of water on the respective bars is about equal, but Galveston has an immense advantage in lying directly on the Gulf, and not requiring the aid of steam tow-boats to assist the progress of shipping.

East Bay, an arm of Galveston Bay formed by East Bayou, which rises near Sabine Bay, is about thirty miles in length. Point Bolivar, a narrow neck of land about thirty miles long, and from two to six wide, divides East Bay from the Gulf. The bay is bounded by low prairies, destitute of timber, with the exception of some groves of live oak. East Bay and Sabine Lake might, as has been observed, be easily united, by opening a communication between East Bayou and Taylor's Creek.

Double Bayou and Turtle Creek are small streams that enter Galveston Bay from the east, above Red Fish Bar.

Trinity (Trinidad) River, the principal tributary

of the Bay of Galveston, is one of the largest rivers of Texas, and possesses at present the greatest comparative extent of navigable waters, having been navigated by steam-boats between three and four hundred miles from its mouth. It is generally about from sixty to eighty yards wide, and eight or ten feet deep, with a rapid current. For eighty miles from its mouth, it runs through a low prairie country, and though its banks are generally steep, its borders in many places are liable to inundation.

Coshatta, or Kettle, Milton, and Kickapoo Creeks enter the Trinity from the east, and Bidias, Bear, and Mulberry Creeks from the west: Hurricane and Bois d'Arc Creeks, on the east, and Richland and West Fork, on the west, are the principal remaining tributaries of the Trinity.

San Jacinto Bay is a branch of the bay of Galveston, containing several pleasant islands. The San Jacinto river, which flows into the bay, is navigable by small steam-boats for a part of its course. Its principal tributaries are Cypress Bayou, and Spring and Lake Creeks. The banks are generally high and little exposed to inundation.

Buffalo Bayou, which flows into San Jacinto Bay, is navigable at all seasons, for steam-boats drawing six feet water, as far as Houston, about thirty-five miles from its mouth. Its principal tributaries are Green Creek and White Oak Bayou from the north, and Vince's, Sim's and Bray's Bayou from the south.

Clear Creek is a small stream flowing into Galveston Bay on the west, above Red Fish Bar; Dick's Creek, another small stream, enters Galveston Bay,

a short distance below Red Fish Bar; Moses, Highland, and Hall's Creeks enter the same bay from the west, as does also Chocolate Bayou, a stream about thirty miles in length, near the western extremity of Galveston island. New Bayou differs little in appearance from Chocolate Bayou.

SAN LUIS HARBOUR.—San Luis Harbour and Inlet are situated near the west end of Galveston island, and derive their chief importance from their proximity to the mouths of the Brázos river and Oyster Creek, the commerce of which with foreign countries will perhaps be conducted through this medium of communication, in consequence of the obstructions to navigation at the confluence of those rivers with the gulf. The harbour is formed by San Luis island and a neck of the mainland, which are said to afford effectual shelter in any weather. It is connected with the bay of Galveston by a shallow sound of from four and a half to six feet water. This harbour is pronounced by some authorities to be one of the best upon the coast of Texas, and equal to any situated on the Mexican gulf. It has been examined by officers of the Republic, as well as by private individuals, and the average depth of water is represented in these reports to exceed twelve feet and a half. The harbour is described as perfectly safe—the channel easy of entrance, and vessels drawing ten feet water may, it is stated, approach within six feet of the shore, either on the island of San Luis, or the mainland. Bastrop Creek, of which Fleus and Austin Bayous are branches, flow into San Luis harbour.

A company have purchased the island, with part

of the mainland, including the harbour, for the purpose of laying off a town, which they propose to connect with the Brazos river by a railroad or canal, and thus obtain the shipments of the produce of the great cotton region of Texas. It is proper to observe that there is considerable difference of opinion (originating probably in conflicting interests) as to the maritime advantages of San Luis.

Brazos River and its Branches.

The distance from Galveston inlet to the *embouchure* of the Brazos is about forty miles coastwise.

The Brazos de Dios, usually called the Brazos River (on the older maps, the *Rio Flores*), rises in the Guadalupe mountains, and has a circuitous course, the whole extent of which is computed to reach one thousand miles. Like Red River, the waters of the Brazos are frequently red, from earthy deposits, and brackish, owing to one of its branches running through a large salt lake, far in the interior. The name of Colorado would be applied to the Brazos with much greater propriety than to the river so designated, the waters of which, instead of being red, as the name indicates, are clear, except during or after its periodical rising; whereas those of the Brazos are red and muddy. The banks of the Brazos, for an extent of two hundred miles from its mouth, range in depth from twenty to forty feet, and in ordinary seasons are not overflowed. After heavy rains, in the upper country, the river swells into a torrent, which descends with great impetuosity. The banks, however, being formed of a

tenacious and slippery red or blue clay, seldom yield to the force of the current. A substratum of the same description of clay extends beneath the sand-bar of the river and the beach; and it is believed that a sufficiently solid foundation might be found for the construction of works, by which the bar could be reduced so as to admit vessels drawing sixteen feet of water, which could then ascend the stream to a considerable distance.

The Brazos enters the gulf without forming any bay, and a shifting sand-bar extends a considerable way from its mouth. Velasco and Quintana are situated, on opposite sides, at the entrance of the river. In approaching the harbour, the Brazos must be made N.W. by N. as far up as Velasco on the eastern shore. The first reach of the river lies at a short distance above, stretching to the west; and its course is then very serpentine all the way to Brazoria (thirty miles), but with an equal depth of water, sufficient to float vessels of comparatively heavy burthen. The depth of water over the bar ranges from six to eleven feet, according to the winds, averaging, during the year, about seven feet. A strong current draws south-west, after passing the bar, running at the rate of from three to four knots an hour; and in approaching the river at Velasco, this current must be carefully provided for, especially with a north-east wind.

The Brazos is exceedingly well adapted for steam navigation. Opposite Velasco its width is about 170 yards, and for five hundred miles it varies from 150 to 200 yards. A large bayou, called East Union, runs from the prairie to the Brazos,

and communicates to the north with Oyster Creek, a stream that runs near the western part of Galveston Bay, and opens to the gulf by an independent mouth, less than two miles from Velasco. The bar of the creek is covered with water, from three to five feet in depth, according to the operation of the wind.

So early as the year 1834 a small steam-boat plied from the mouth of the Brazos to San Felipe de Austin, the head-quarters of the first colony from the United States, 150 miles from the sea by the course of the river. Since that time the enterprise of the settlers from the north has produced a great comparative increase in the number of river-steamers. The navigation of the Brazos requires and is susceptible of much improvement; at present, it presents obstacles to the ascent of steamers of moderate size as high as Richmond, except during the rise of the waters in the winter season.

The following minor tributaries enter the Brazos from the east:—Marsh, Fish Pond, Clear, Ten Mile, Bowman's, Peyton's, Fresh, Tahuacono, Bear, and Aguila creeks; and from the west, Crow, Big, Mill, Caney, New Year's, Elm, Pond, Davis, Cow, Lake, and Towacaney creeks. The branches of greater note are,—the Navosota, from the east, to which there are four small tributary streams; the Yagua, on the west, having a like number of branches; the Little Brazos, with which four creeks unite, from the east; the San Andres (or Little River) from the west, of which, Sandy, Brushy, San Gabriel, Clay's, Salado, Lampaces, and San Leon creeks, are branches; the Bosque, from the

west; Nolan's River and the Red Fork (the latter imparts its ruddy tinge to the Brazos) from the east; Palo Pinto and Tahcajuncua from the west. The Incoque, an important branch of the Brazos, rising in the Guadalupe mountains, flows eastward, until it adds its contribution to the main stream.

Above its falls the Brazos is a smooth and placid body of water, and for many miles towards the source its apparent magnitude is as great as it is below the falls. Seven miles below Brazoria, and east of the Brazos, is a lake four or five miles long, and only 200 or 300 yards wide, so closely resembling a portion of the Brazos in appearance that there can hardly exist a doubt that it once formed the bed of the stream, which possibly, at some former day, poured its waters into the west bay of Galveston.

San Bernard and Old Caney.

The San Bernard, a river 135 miles in length, enters the Gulf of Mexico about fourteen miles south-west of the mouth of the Brazos. It has two tributaries from the west, the West Branch and Peach Creek.

About eighteen miles from the *embouchure* of the San Bernard, Old Caney Creek, a stream forty-five miles in length, having its source within a short distance of the Colorado River, enters the gulf. It is conjectured that it has at some period formed the bed of the Colorado; at all events, they could now be easily united.

A succession of small lakes, under the name of

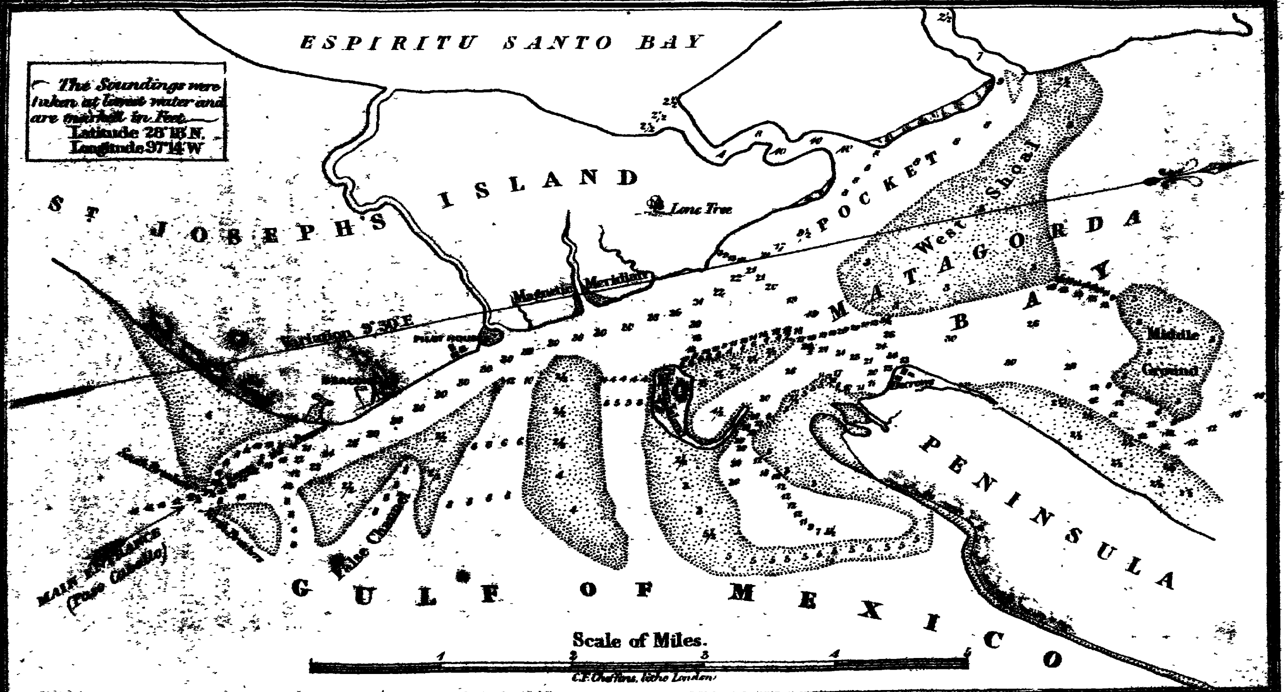
the Cedar Lake Creek, extends from the gulf in a north-westerly direction.

Matagorda Bay and its Tributaries.

From the mouth of the Brazos River to the Matagorda Pass is about eighty miles, the coast trending to the south-west.

The Bay of Matagorda, which is about sixty miles in length, and from six to ten in breadth, is separated from the Gulf of Mexico by a peninsula, varying in breadth from one to two miles. Paso Cavallo, the entrance into the bay, is situated in latitude 28° 18′ north, and longitude 97° 14′ west, about forty-five miles below the town. It is always safe for vessels drawing from eight to nine feet water, which, once within the bay, are as secure as if they were in a dock, being completely land-locked, with from eight to twenty feet depth of water, and a soft muddy bottom.

The annexed chart by Mr. Douglas Wallach, civil engineer from the United States, affords directions for vessels entering the bay of Matagorda. The report which accompanies the chart is also useful for the explanation it conveys, and is extremely curious as well as instructive, in regard to the evidence it supplies of the rapid changes produced by the combined action of the winds and waters upon the coast of Texas: I therefore publish it at length.


ESPIRITU SANTO BAY
The Soundings were taken at low water and are marked in Feet.
Latitude 28°18′ N.
Longitude 97°14′ W
ST JOSEPH'S ISLAND
Lone Tree
POCKET
West Shoal
MATAGORDA BAY
Middle Ground
Magnetic Meridian
Variation 9°30′ E
PENINSULA
False Channel
GULF OF MEXICO
MAIN ENTRANCE
(Paso Caballo)
Scale of Miles.
1
2
3
4
5
C.F. Cheffins, litho London

"*Report of W. D. Wallach, Esq., Civil Engineer, on the Examination of the Paso Cavallo.*

"TO THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF MATAGORDA.

"Matagorda, March 25th, 1839.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I HEREWITH send you a chart of the Paso Cavallo, drawn from the notes of a trigonometrical survey undertaken at the request of sundry citizens of your town, who were desirous of ascertaining the exact character of said Pass, and also a sketch of that part of Matagorda Bay lying between your town landing and the anchorage, which shows the result of an examination made by your order, with the plan of such works as I recommend for the improvement of navigation in that vicinity.

"The chart of the Pass shows the position and character of the coasts, channels, and shoals bordering on, or in any way affecting the navigation of the same. The definite position of the channels and shoals was ascertained by trigonometrical observations; that of the mainland and islands was obtained by meandering with the chain and instrument. The soundings marked on the chart may be depended on, as the result of careful measurements made at the lowest stage of water in some cases, and reduced to that standard in all others.

"I find that the channel east of Pelican Island, and next to the Peninsula, is rapidly closing up. A year ago there was nine feet over the bar, where there is but five feet at the time being. This fact is to be accounted for, in the first instance, by the enlargement of Pelican Island, which is daily extending its dimensions. Its position being near the centre of the *débouché* of the bay into the Gulf of Mexico, serves to divide the force of the current, as well as to form a firm base upon which sands accumulate that are thrown there by north and north-east winds, thus forming the shoal making out from Pelican Island in a due north-course; which, together with that forming the pocket

with St. Joseph's (as will be seen by inspecting the map), are so situated as to pass between them, and to give direction to the greater part of the current coursing down the bay, and thereby to lessen its original effect in scouring the sands forming the bar at the entrance east of Pelican Island, which bar is made by the action of the south and south-west winds upon the waters of the gulf. A third shoal, making out from the extreme west point of the peninsula, may be adduced as an additional cause operating to produce the before-mentioned effect. This last shoal is formed by sands thrown up from the bay by the north and north-east winds, and by those thrown up from the gulf by south and south-east winds, as well as by the blowing of sand left dry at the ebb-tide on the beaches bordering both the bay and gulf. It is so protected by the peculiar form and position of the point of the peninsula from violent abrasions, either by currents or swells, and by the eddy created over it, during the flow and ebb of the tides, that it is enlarging much more rapidly than any other obstruction to navigation affecting the said eastern entrance.

" The growth of these obstructions will probably stop the passage of the water through that channel entirely. From a close study of the peculiar operation of the currents and winds, as developed by the perceptible change now taking place in the form of the west point of the peninsula, I am induced to believe that the bay, in former times, entered the gulf much to the east of its present *débouché*, for the action of all causes of sufficient importance to affect the water may tend to stretch the peninsula towards the west: indeed, I have been informed by gentlemen who entered the bay some seventeen years ago, that at that time the main channel was situated one-third of the distance from Decrow's house to the sand hammocks near the present end of the peninsula above ordinary low water mark. It was furthermore remarked, that Pelican Island, which at present is large enough to afford safe and ample protection to all vessels anchoring under its lee, was then about as large as Red

Fish Shoals, which are just rising high enough to show their crown above low water mark. At that rate, ten years will make a marked difference in the position of the present pass and channels thereabouts. The shoal (having two and a half feet water over it) coursing down the peninsula from east to west, and extending one-third of a mile into the bay, will have followed the formation of the peninsula, and will probably occupy the position of the channel close to the peninsula, opposite Decrow's house. Another circumstance tending to strengthen my belief in the remarkable changeability of the point of the peninsula, was the effect of a single storm and flood (which occurred during my sojourn there) upon the mouths and dimensions of the various lagoons, ponds and bayous, which course through the west end of the peninsula in all directions. The light sands forming the point were driven about so as to change its appearance materially; some lagoons were opened, others closed, as if by magic; new sand hammocks sprung up, and the end of the peninsula, above ordinary low water mark, made about 100 feet towards west. Such are, and naturally will be, the effect of the meeting of strong currents and violent winds upon low sand flats, in like situations. When the passage closes entirely, the result will be highly beneficial to navigation, for it will force the whole body of water through a much narrower channel, and thus either scour the bar affecting the main entrance, and produce a greater depth of water over it, or it will scour some one of the bars connecting the shoals between Pelican Island and the main pass. If the main pass be deepened, then that increase will enable vessels to trade in this bay that draw more water than any now engaged in the business of the country. If either of the other bars be scoured, it will open an additional channel, probably as deep as the present main entrance, which I judge of sufficient depth to permit the entrance of vessels drawing nine and a half feet water. This additional channel will take its direction from the shoals between which it may lie. The chart will show you at a

glance, that let either of the lower passages be the one deepened, the effect will be to permit vessels to enter, quartering with the wind due north, that being the only direction from whence a breeze renders it at all difficult to enter.

"The four feet channel immediately south and west of Pelican Island can never deepen so as to be of service, as it lies nearly at right angles to the direction of the current running out, which scours the bar; it also lies parallel to the direction of the south-east winds, and their action on the waters from the gulf from the bars. The coast of St. Joseph's Island is slowly being worn away by abrasion, though by no means so rapidly as the shoals are forming, which will unite Pelican Island to the Peninsula, so that, at a future time, when the passage next the peninsula may have closed, it can be secure from further injurious washing by a sea-wall built parallel to its base. I suggest this project for action at some remote period, when the compression of the waters into a much narrower channel than they now flow through will (as I think highly probable) have increased the depth over the bar. Then, great national benefits may be received by expending an amount of money to make the change permanent, which will be trifling when compared with the good resulting therefrom. The soundings over the bar were taken on two different occasions: on the first day, there was an average low tide, then the least water found was ten feet eight inches. On the latter occasion the tide was remarkably low. A long continued north wind had reduced the level of water surface lower than it had been for three months, notwithstanding that this is the season at which extremely low tides may be expected. Then I found nine feet eight inches to be the least depth over the bar, in the position between the breakers noted on the chart; so that from ten to eleven and a half feet water may be calculated on with safety, as the average depth to be found there. I arranged the beacons, so that they now point 640 feet further west on the line

between the breakers, which is the direction across the bar, affording two feet more water than is usually found, at the same stages of the tide, on the line navigated by the former pilot, that is, if we take the direction of his beacons as the range in which he usually crossed. I have, however, judged it prudent to reduce all the soundings to the standard of lowest water, lest accident might happen to vessels navigating by the chart. I find that, at present, there are three anchorages immediately within the pass, which will answer the temporary wants of vessels either entering or departing, should winds or tides render a short delay advisable; though they are very subject to sudden changes from the shifting of the shoals bordering the islands and peninsula, and are therefore not to be depended on. After passing through the channel, between the "middle ground" and "west shoal," the course to the town anchorage is parallel to the peninsula, is of easy access, and affords a good holding ground. It is amply protected by the peninsula, mainland, and Dog Island Bar. By a trigonometrical observation, I ascertained that the position of an anchored vessel, drawing eight feet, was within four miles and two-thirds of the town-landing.

"I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
"With much respect,
"Your obedient servant,
"W. D. WALLACH, C. E."

Judicious improvement in the bay and landing, with the removal of the obstructions to the navigation of the Colorado, which may be effected at an easy expenditure, would secure to Matagorda a first-rate position as a commercial depôt. Its centrality, and its situation, with respect to the highly productive sections of the interior, impart to it peculiar and important advantages.

South-west of the main pass lies Matagorda

island, which is about forty miles in length, and from four to six in width. Cavallo island intervenes between Matagorda Bay and the bay of Espiritu Santo, which are connected by two narrow passes.

Live Oak, Austin, and Prairie Creeks, small streams rising in a large prairie, enter Matagorda Bay from the north, to the eastward of the *embouchure* of its principal tributary—the river Colorado.

The Colorado of Texas rises in the Guadalupe mountains, from which it has a course to the sea of about 800 miles, running in a north-easterly direction to its junction with the Pasigono, whence it veers to the south-east. The banks are steep and seldom overflowed. About ten miles from its mouth is a "raft," formed of drifted timber, which obstructs navigation. The Colorado enters the bay of Matagorda by two outlets, about two miles apart.

The following creeks enter the Colorado from the east; Cumming's, Rabb's, Pine, Oak, Eblin's, Walberger's, Bear, Hamilton, Cypress, Honey, and Hunting: from the west, Wilson's, Jenning's, Jones', Buckner's, Cedar, Walnut, Onion, Spring, and Bull. The waters of Onion Creek sink towards the mouth, and the stream is much larger twenty-five miles from the Colorado than it is at the point of confluence, a peculiarity not uncommon in the minor streams of this district. Large springs frequently burst through the soil, and after running a few miles, entirely disappear. In the summer, the waters subside considerably in the beds of most of the subordinate streams.

The Agua Fria, formed by a large spring in the

Valle de Flores, enters the Colorado from the west, twelve miles above Austin, the capital of Texas. The stream runs for 600 yards from its source through a solid block resembling marble, and then breaks into a perpendicular fall of twenty feet.

Twenty-two miles above Austin, the Piedernales, or Flint River, enters the Colorado from the west. Although its length does not exceed seventy miles, it is so much increased by tributary waters from mountain springs, that it rivals the main stream in volume near the point of confluence. Its banks are very steep, its current gentle, and its waters so transparent, that the pebbles in its bed are visible at a depth of many feet.

The Llano River flows from the same quarter as the Piedernales, which, as a body of water, it much resembles. A few miles above the mouth of the Llano, and four miles below Hunting Creek, are the great Falls of the Colorado, a succession of cascades extending about 800 yards. The first fall is about twenty feet perpendicular:—within 100 yards there is another of ten, and thus they continue until they reach a perpendicular height of nearly 100 feet. The Colorado flows with undiminished size and an untroubled current for about 200 miles above the Falls; in these characteristics resembling the Brazos.

The San Saba, a river of excellent water, about 200 miles in length, rises in a spur of the Guadalupe mountains, winding throughout its course between two hilly ridges, which extend from the mountains almost to the margin of the Colorado. The tributaries of this river are few and small.

For forty miles above its confluence with the Colorado, the San Saba is about fifty yards wide, and generally deep, but obstructed by numerous shoals.

The Pecan Bayou which enters the river Colorado about twenty-five miles above the mouth of the San Saba, has a course about 120 miles in length: 100 miles above the mouth of the Pecan Bayou the Pasigono River enters the Colorado from the north-east. Its tributaries are the Piaroya, the Muchique, and the Salado Creeks. Above the mouth of the Pasigono, the principal branches of the Colorado are the Pisape junova, Arroyo Frio, and the Aguilas.

The general appearance of the Colorado is similar to the Thames from Chelsea to Richmond, being, perhaps, rather larger than the English river. During the dry season, at low water, its average depth may be from six to eight feet, except at the shoals. Of these there are but three of importance, composed of large loose rocks, easy to be removed. Even now, they admit the passage of boats drawing two feet of water. When the contemplated improvements have been completed, it is anticipated that the Colorado will be navigable by small steamers of a suitable construction, as high as Austin, which is about 220 miles above its *embouchure*. Measures are in progress for removing the raft of drift-wood above the mouth of the river.

Trespalacios Bay is situated at the confluence of the creek which bears the same name, with the bay of Matagorda. Vessels that cross the bar at Matagorda Pass can approach nearly close to the shore at this place. Twelve miles west of Trespa-

lacios Bay, Caranchuhua creek enters the Bay of Matagorda.

La Baca Bay and its Tributaries.

La Baca Bay is a north-westerly branch of Matagorda Bay, of easy access to vessels that have crossed the bar at the pass. Its principal tributary is La Baca River, which is about 100 miles in length, and has four feet water for above twenty miles from its mouth, within a short distance of its junction with the Navidad, a stream of nearly equal extent. The waters of La Baca are clear and wholesome, flowing over a sandy bed intermixed with gravel. Mustang, Waterhole, Spring, Upper and Lower Rocky Creeks, and the Sandies, are tributaries of the Navidad; Mary, Augusta, and Valentine's Creeks, on the east, and Brushy, Smithers', Brown's, Rocky, and Ponton, on the west, are the remaining tributaries of La Baca River. Four small streams, the Aronoso, Garsitas, Union and Chocolate, flow into La Baca Bay. The La Baca and Navidad rivers are each navigable for small steamboats, for about thirty-five miles from their mouths.

Espiritu Santo Bay and its Tributaries.

The Bay of Espiritu Santo is a shallow body of water, formed by the confluence of the Guadalupe and San Antonio rivers, and connected with the bays of La Baca and Aransazua, so that vessels of light draft may pass from one to the other.

The river Guadalupe rises in the Guadalupe mountains, and flows in an easterly direction for

about 200 miles, when it unites with the San Marcos, and assumes a south-easterly course, until it enters the bay. Owing to the numerous bends of the river, and the shallowness of Espiritu Santo Bay, the Guadalupe is of little utility as a medium of communication. It is generally about 150 yards wide and from five to six feet deep, with remarkably pure waters and very steep banks.

The Coleto River, which is sixty-five miles in length, flows in a south-easterly direction until it enters the Guadalupe. Sandy Creek on the west, and Peach, Plum, Kerr's, and Smith's Creeks on the east, are tributary to the Guadalupe. The San Marcos a stream of considerable size, has its source in a spring which ejects its waters from beneath a large rock, and forms a transparent river forty yards in width and five feet in depth, abounding in fish. It is regarded as a natural curiosity. The Rio Blanco, a beautiful stream of crystal water seventy miles in length, enters the San Marcos a few miles below its source.

The San Antonio flows into the Guadalupe from the west, four or five miles from the bay. Four springs which rise in a small eminence at a short distance from San Antonio de Bexar, and unite about a mile above the town, form the river, which is fifty yards wide, and four or five deep,—ever pure, ever flowing, and preserving an equality of temperature throughout the year. The rapid waters of the San Antonio, running over a pebbly bed, are remarkably wholesome, and so clear that small fish may be seen distinctly at a depth of ten

feet. The river is navigable for small steam-boats to within ten miles of Goliad.

A few miles from the mouth of the Cleto, a creek which enters the San Antonio on the east, is the confluence of the Cibolo and San Antonio rivers. The Cibolo, which is one hundred and fifty miles in length, has its source in a spring that bursts from a peak of the Guadalupe mountains. It is a small stream destitute of tributaries, and of greatest apparent magnitude at its head waters.

The Medina, the principal tributary of the San Antonio, is worthy of being wedded to its limpid mate. It has its origin in a large fountain, in an extensive valley of the high lands, about eighty miles north-west of the town of San Antonio, and runs in a south-easterly direction, until it unites with the main stream, about twenty miles below the town. It is a very pretty river, about twenty-five yards wide, its bed lying about twelve feet below the surface, and its current flowing at the rate of three miles an hour. In the valley whence the Medina issues, it receives contributions from the Potranca, Sauz, Jeronimo, Sequia, San Julian, and Bandera Creeks, all of which flow from springs in the high lands. The Medio and Leon Creeks enter the Medina from the north, below the mouth of the Potranca.

The Salado, a small but beautiful stream which issues from a spring about twelve miles north of San Antonio, and passes within three miles of that place, joins the San Antonio river about sixteen miles below the town.

ARANSAS, OR ARANSAZUA BAY AND ITS TRIBUTARIES.

The Bay of Aransas lies between the south end of the island of St. Jóseph's and the north point of Mustang island, being very close to the latter, and almost at right angles with the coast. It is easy to be distinguished, and has a narrow, shifting sand bar at the entrance, the depth of water on which is very variable, according to the action of the winds. The soundings as laid down in Mr. Munroe's plan drawn up in 1833, and published in this work, cannot now be depended upon as a guide to navigators. According to the latest published authority, there is a depth of eight feet water over the bar at the lowest tide. Mr. Munroe, in the Amos Wright schooner, made the latitude of the bar in Aransas inlet, *by reckoning*, to be about 27° 45′. On his first approach, there was low water; the tide being out, the boat which was sent a-head only found six feet water, with breakers all across. He therefore anchored with a current setting to the southward, at least two knots. Vessels must be exceedingly cautious in lying to off the bar, as they will speedily drift to leeward. The next morning, at high water, he found nine feet water at the shallowest place, and upwards of half a mile across the bar without any breakers. The bar is very narrow, with good anchorage inside. A vessel must not attempt to proceed up the bay without sending a boat a-head to ascertain the passage. Between the outermost and inner bay there is an island: the passage is on the southwest side. It has been stated in Texas newspapers, several years subsequent to Mr. Munroe's survey, that a gale had

ARANZAS BAY,

as Surveyed by Capt. [illegible] (of the "Amos Wright")

Copano Landing

Lagoon

Shallow Water

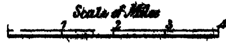
Oyster Banks

Oyster Banks

Live Oak Point

Oyster Banks

Shallow Water



A

Wolf Point

Notes

The Soundings are in feet
The Current is governed by the winds & generally sets in the bay 12 hours each day
A In this bay you will find from 6 to 12 feet water with oyster banks on both sides
A strong southerly current prevails on this Coast
Latitude of the Bar 27 47 North. The Bar has from 5 to 9 feet water. The Northerly winds drive the Water from the Bar. It often breaks in 9 feet with fresh Easterly winds
In running for the bar bring the Pole on Signal Point to bear WNW and run for it, till the Pole on said Point bears SWBW. Then run in for it*
The land on this Coast is very remarkable being formed of sand Hills mostly

*After you have crossed the bar you will be governed by the breakers on each side of you.

Marshy Point

Signal Point

Breakers

CURLEW ISLAND

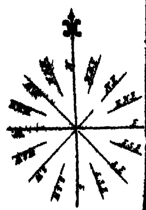
Shallow Water

Marshy Ground

Shallow Water

Sand Point

Breakers



wrought such extraordinary changes in the channel of Aransas bay, that the soundings which formerly gave only eight or ten feet, then gave eighteen or twenty! The bay is about twenty-five miles from north-east to south-west, and about twelve miles wide. It has a general depth of from twelve to sixteen feet, but is obstructed by a shoal and a range of islands which run across, and over which there is not more than four feet and a half of water. The harbour is perfectly secure. Sailing vessels, or steam-boats, drawing four feet and a half water, may pass through the bays of Matagorda and Espiritu Santo, into the bay of Aransas, and from that into Corpus Christi Bay, whence there is a passage with about three feet water into the Laguna del Madre and the Barra de Santiago.

The island of St. Josephs is about twenty-four miles in length, and from two to four in breadth. It is separated from Matagorda island by the Espiritu Santo inlet.

Copano Bay is a branch of Aransas twenty miles in length, and from one to three in breadth. A neck of land, which bears about north-west of the bar, distant twenty-five miles, called Live Oak Point, high and pleasantly situated, with good water and a heavy growth of live oak, separates Copano from Aransas. Any vessel that has crossed the bar of Aransas can enter Copano Bay. Off this point the passage is difficult, on account of the oyster banks.

No large tributaries flow into these bays. The rivers Refugio and Aransas, with Copano and Melon's Creeks, are the principal. The river Refugio, which enters the Copano Bay through an

inconsiderable body of water called Refugio Bay, is formed by four clear streams,—Saco, Blanco, Middle, and Sauz. Refugio River is navigable for steamboats drawing three feet water, up to the town of Refugio. Aransas River is about eighty miles in length, and has a few small branches of pure water.

Corpus Christi Bay and its Tributaries.

Corpus Christi Bay is about forty miles from north to south, and twenty from east to west. It is accessible from the gulf by a narrow pass over the bar, on which there is from five to six feet water. The bay is beautiful: the water deep, clear, and free from bars, and the beach elevated.

Mustang Island, which separates the bay from the Gulf of Mexico, is about thirty-five miles in length, and from two to four in breadth. The situation is fine, and the land rich, but destitute of timber.

Nueces Bay, a branch of Corpus Christi Bay, with which it is connected over a pass of four feet water, is formed by the *embouchure* of the Nueces River, its only tributary, and is about ten miles long, and five wide.

The Rio de las Nueces, or Nueces River, a beautiful and rapid stream, rises in the Guadalupe mountains, running nearly in an easterly direction, a course of about 300 miles. The stream, which is deep and narrow, with very steep banks, is navigable for small boats about forty miles from its mouth, and, with some improvement, the navigation might be extended to the point of confluence

with the Rio Frio, its principal tributary. The latter river rises in the Guadalupe mountains, and is about 150 miles in length; its chief tributaries are the San Miguel, Atascoso, the La Parida, Tordillo, and Puenta de la Piedra. The San Miguel is about 120 miles in length, and runs almost parallel to the Rio Frio, until they unite. It has a number of tributaries, most of which rise in an extensive prairie between the Medina and the Rio Frio. Its remotest branch is the Arroyo Saco, which rises in a beautiful and fertile valley between two considerable mountain ranges. The Laguna, the Leona, and the Arroyo de Uvalde, are also branches of the Rio Frio,—the last-named being formed of nearly a hundred springs of crystal water that gush from the munificent soil of the valley, which is headed by a singularly difficult defile, named the Cañon de Uvalde.

Three small streams enter Corpus Christi Bay west of the mouth of the Nueces, Agua Dolce, Las Pintas, and Salt Creeks.

Three miles from the Nueces is a pond or lake, two or three leagues in length, and one hundred yards in width, stocked with a variety of fish.

The Laguna del Madre and its Tributaries.

The Laguna del Madre is a long, shallow sound, formed by the mainland upon the west, and the Isla del Padrè upon the east. It is above eighty miles in length, and from four to six in width. Its shallowness renders it little available for navigation, having in many places not more than from eight to fourteen inches of water. Near to the

mainland, there is a narrow channel, with an average depth of three feet and a half.

At the southern extremity of the lagoon is the inlet of Barra de Santiago, which has from six to seven feet of water on the bar, and affords safe and commodious anchorage within. Most of the goods intended for the Mexican town of Matamoros, south of the Rio Grande, are landed here, and drawn by waggons to their destination. A narrow neck of land intervenes between the Barra de Santiago and the Rio Grande.

The San Gertrudes, a stream of brackish water, rises in a large prairie, and runs in an easterly direction until it reaches the lagoon. A fresh-water lake (La Escondida) communicates with this stream by a rivulet. The Los Olmos, a stream about sixty miles in length, enters the lagoon twenty miles south of the mouth of the San Gertrudes. The Sal Colorado is a salt-water river, fifty miles in length, which rises in a prairie country, and flows into the southern part of the lagoon, towards the Barra de Santiago.

THE RIO GRANDE DEL NORTE, OR GREAT RIVER OF THE NORTH.

The Rio Grande, called also the Rio Bravo, from its rapid current, rises in the Sierra Verde, which forms the point of separation between the streams that flow into the Gulf of Mexico, and those which flow into the Great Southern Ocean.

The sources of the Rio Grande are divided from the sources of the Western Colorado, which flows into the Gulf of California, by a mountainous tract,

from twelve to thirteen leagues in breadth. This is one of nine points mentioned by Humboldt, as offering a greater or less probability of opening a communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. It has an estimated course of 1,800 miles, with but few tributaries. Of these, the principal is the river Puerco, which is about 500 miles in length, and runs nearly parallel to the Rio Grande, at an average distance of eighty miles. At its junction with the Rio Grande, from which it is separated by disgregated mountain ridges, the stream of the Puerco is about 100 yards in width.

Like the Mississippi, the Oronoco, and other great rivers of the American continent, the Rio Grande has its periodical risings. Its waters begin to swell in April, they are at their height early in May, and they subside towards the end of June. The banks are extremely steep, and the waters muddy.

At its *embouchure* in the Gulf of Mexico, which it enters over a shallow, shifting bar, with an average of from three to five feet water, the width of the Rio Grande is about 300 yards. From above the bar to Loredo, a town two hundred miles from the coast, it has a smooth, deep current; above Loredo it is broken by rapids. The following remarks respecting this river and its immediate locality are taken from a MS. Report, drawn up by Mr. Egerton (an Englishman), surveyor to the Texas and Rio Grande Land Company, for the use of the Directors.

"There are many fine situations on the Rio Grande for the location of commercial towns, whilst fine farms may cover its banks. For stock-raising,

the country throughout, from the Rio Grande to the Medina, it is universally allowed, cannot be surpassed. Lower down the river, towards the town of Loredo, in the whole of its course through the state of Tamaulipas, where the country leaves the neighbourhood of the mountains, and is a dead flat for a great extent, very severe droughts are generally experienced, but this evil diminishes rapidly above the point mentioned.

"The streams emptying into the Rio Grande, such as Las Moras, Piedras Pintas, el Sequete, &c., have all, near their junction, excellent falls and sites for mills, with plenty of materials for their construction at hand, while windmills are most peculiarly adapted to the whole section of the country, where a calm is almost a phenomenon.

"The delightful breezes which continually blow here render the temperature extremely pleasant, even when the thermometer stands high. The nights are never sultry, arising, no doubt, from the constant current of air, and from the days in summer not being so long as in more northern latitudes, where the earth and air become greatly heated by the long presence of the sun, and the short nights not permitting them to cool before the sun again appears.* * * *

"The course of the Rio Grande from the Dolores Ferry to a short distance below the town of Loredo, is in various places more or less impeded at low water by rocks, which in some parts are seen rising in points above the surface of the waters; these projections always leave a deep channel against one or the other shore. In other places, smooth ledges

of rock cause rapids rather than falls; but these, with two exceptions, have also good channels. At about two leagues below the Presidio del Rio Grande, one of the ledges traverses the river, in an oblique direction, from one bank to the other, causing a slight fall at low stages of the water, and there having on its edge probably not more than from ten to twelve inches. Immediately below this, the river, for about half a league, is turned into a variety of channels by a vast number of islands, from whence this place is called 'Las Islitas.' The impression formed, on the first and partial view of the river, is extremely discouraging as to the practicability of its navigation. I, however, know that two moderate-sized flat boats had actually passed, at low water, from above the ledge I have spoken of, amongst 'Las Islitas,' and so on to Matamoros.

"Having obtained a guide who had been acquainted with all the localities for upwards of twenty years, I spent a whole day in the water, in a laborious but interesting examination, and had the satisfaction to see the seemingly great and numerous obstacles gradually diminish, until they resolved themselves into one comparatively trifling,— the only difficulty being to pass the great ledge. And for this, nature appears to have provided; for, immediately where the ledge leaves the western bank, the shore runs out into a point, which might be cut through at an expense insignificant when compared with the advantages resulting from the opening of a free communication, *at all times*, between an extensive tract of country possessing *immense* capabilities and the port of Matamoros,

which would thus, in the course of no very considerable period, become the New Orleans, and the Rio Grande, the Mississippi, of this part of the world. There is nothing wanting but population and free intercourse with the coast, to develop the resources of this district, which are not surpassed probably by any other section of the globe.

"Having passed the great ledge, deep water is at once found; a channel of which leads by a tortuous route, through 'Las Islitas,' completely avoiding the numerous minor ledges, which to a casual observer appear impassable. The current through the channel is naturally stronger than in the unobstructed parts of the river, but not so impetuous as to be considered an obstacle. A short distance below Loredo is another great ledge, traversing the river in a similar way, from bank to bank. The upper edge of this is, however, much further below the surface of the water than that of 'Las Islitas,' and might be passed in like manner, should there not be sufficient water on it for boats of light draught, as I conceive, except on very rare occasions, there almost always would be. In all probability, these ledges do not terminate at the banks, but the opening a channel through them *in-shore* would, of course, be less troublesome than on the river: although, even there, I imagine it might be accomplished with ease, as it lies in strata sloping down to the bed of the river, and leaving but a narrow edge with shoal water.

"Having reached thus far, the Gulf of Mexico may be gained without further impediment or difficulty, beyond a necessary knowledge of the river, as in the Mississippi. All I have said has reference

to those periods when the river is at a *low stage*. When this is not the case, and the stream is even at a *moderate height*, I believe there is *no* obstacle to its navigation. It would, perhaps, be advisable, at one or two places, to widen the channel which runs between the bank and the pointed rocks I have mentioned; which might be easily effected as the rocks are but *single rows*, as it were, the ends of which I believe there would be little difficulty in removing.

"The most practicable method for navigating the Rio Grande would, I think, be by steam-boats carrying simply their machinery and fuel, and towing flat-keel boats. A commencement, at least, ought to be made in this way, and boats of a different description might afterwards be introduced, as experience dictated. It would be a great assistance, in ascending the river, if these boats were furnished with masts and upper sails, or what are called 'flying topsails,' as the prevailing wind, all through the country, is from the south-east, and the average course of the river throughout is nearly north-west and south-east. Lower sails would be less useful, as the banks are in many places high, and in others covered with trees.

"Above the Dolores Ferry, I am disposed to believe that the river is perfectly open into Chihuahua and New Mexico. I do not, however, speak from personal observation, as I do respecting the lower part of the river, but am guided by the information received from numerous sources, quite unconnected with each other, and invariably agreeing. A few years since, a steam-boat ascended the

river to the lower great ledge, but the water being rather low, the captain was reluctant to pass it, although there was sufficient depth, fearful lest he should be left on the upper side, in case the river fell. This steam-boat was of an ordinary construction, as was another which had previously ascended above Camargo.

"The most important object is, after all, the navigation *downward*, as the means of conveying the surplus produce to market; and this is not problematical, for it *has already been done.* No place can offer a finer market than Matamoros, to which the produce would float down in flat boats, which on their arrival there, could be sold for more than their cost, while pine timber being worth more than ninety dollars the thousand feet, cypress, of which our boats are constructed, would, no doubt, bring a still higher price. Flour is worth, at the present moment, from forty-five to fifty dollars the barrel. Indian corn is frequently sold at six dollars the fanega, or sack, of three bushels; butter and cheese, if not even of the best kind, fetch a high price, as none is made by the Mexicans. Poultry and eggs would sell well, and are produced in great abundance, with scarcely any trouble or expense; live stock, also, of every description, and garden produce would find a ready market. Cotton, wool, and sugar might, perhaps, be more advantageously disposed of at the interior towns, although there is no reason why manufactories of the two first should not be established in the locality. An extensive trade might be opened with the Indians for peltries,

such as buffalo robes and beaver skins, which would sell well at Matamoros.

"An extensive trade is carried on with the State of Chihuahua, by a very circuitous route, from Matamoros, by way of Monterey and Saltillo: whereas Dolores lies in a direct line between Aransas Bay and the city of Chihuahua, and much more so from Matamoros than the town of Saltillo does. The natural consequence, therefore, will be, that this trade will turn through Dolores, by the new and direct road, which is now opening from it to the bay, as from Dolores it can be continued on to Chihuahua. The entire route, in addition to its being far shorter, would also be through a country easy to be traversed, instead of one very difficult, as is the present route of the traders. When the navigation of the Rio Grande is open, the route will be still easier, and even less expensive, as goods can be conveyed from Matamoros to a depôt somewhere on the river near Dolores, from whence they could be forwarded to Chihuahua."

General Pike of the United States army visited Santa Fé, and the banks of the Rio Grande, on an exploring expedition, in the beginning of the year 1807. In his published narrative it is stated, that a little below the village of Albuquerque, the Rio Grande was 400 yards wide, but not more than three feet deep.

The streams of Texas afford great facilities for the working of mills and manufacturing machinery by water power; besides supplying the wants of the farmer and grazier.

Fresh Water Lakes and Ponds.

Pools of fresh water are found East of Galveston, and between the Trinity and the Brazos rivers; and lakes, west of the latter. The principal lake of Texas lying east of Caney Creek, in the midst of a prairie, is about ten miles long, and from one to three in width.

Owing to the dry and porous character of the soil, many of the rivulets of Texas cease to run during the summer. In the sand-bed branches fed by small springs, the water not unfrequently retires by day and returns at night, to the great surprise of the traveller, on stirring from his encampment at early morn. An ample supply of good and cool water fit for all domestic uses may be procured in every section of the country, by digging wells of a moderate depth. Rain-water, easily collected in tanks and cisterns, is frequently used on the eastern coast, and is, when cooled with ice, agreeable to the taste, in warm weather; but this mode of keeping the essential element is objected to as tending, in the low lands, to the production of annoying insects.

Heavy rains, and the sudden descent of torrents from the high lands, sometimes occasion unexpected overflows on the sloping grounds adjacent to the water-courses. They are, however, of too limited an extent and brief duration, to be seriously injurious to property or health. The rise of even the minor streams, in the rainy season, is sufficient to enable the settlers to convey their surplus produce by boats, or small craft, to the coast. Free,

on the one hand, from the overwhelming inundations of the Mississippi and its vast tributaries, and on the other, from the scanty or partial distribution of water, which occasions total barrenness in some extensive sections of Mexico, and in others the extremes of sterility and fruitfulness, Texas derives from the earth and the clouds as large a share of aqueous nutriment as any portion of the temperate zone. It is the rare felicity of this favoured land to combine within itself the advantages both of a northern and a southern climate, evinced in its serene skies, its branching streams, its fertilising rains, and its diversified products.

From the southern boundary of Texas, onwards to the Equator, the tendency of the regular division of wet and dry seasons increases, until they form the great climatic distinctions.

In Central Mexico, the distribution of the year into four periods is unrecognised and unknown—the only divisions being the rainy (*Estacion de las Aguas*) and the dry (*el Estio*) seasons. The first, which continues between four and five months, commences about May;—the second includes the remainder of the year. In the southern parts of Upper California the seasons partake, in a moderate degree, of the same character; whereas, in the northern districts, the rains are more equally diffused. Contrary to the order of the seasons in Central Mexico, the rains of the southern region of Upper California have their periodical commencement about November, and continue until April. Springs and rivers do not abound in this fine country, but water can generally be obtained by digging

wells. As a maritime station, California surpasses every other section of the western coast of America.

The rivers which have their sources west of the Rocky Mountains, have a wild, broken and turbulent character, singularly contrasted with the regular and uninterrupted flow of the rivers on the eastern side. The latter, though sometimes boisterous, are generally free from obstructions and easily navigated: but the rivers of the west descend steeply and impetuously, and are continually breaking into rapids and cascades. In August, 1833, Captain Wyeth, an American trader, voyaged in a boat made of three buffalo skins, stretched on a light frame, stitched together, and the seams payed with elk-tallow and ashes, from the rapids of the Bighorn to Cantonment Leavenworth, the frontier post of the United States on the Missouri River.

CHAPTER III.

Climate of Texas—Its Variety and general Salubrity—Causes of its superiority to the Climate of Louisiana—Prevalent Winds—Average Heat of Summer and genial influence of the prevailing Breeze—Drought and unequal distribution of Rain in Summer—Northers—Mildness of the Winters in Texas Proper—Cold of New Mexico—Prospects of Medical Men—Precautions for the Preservation of Health—Absence of Pulmonary Complaints—Singular Salubrity of North-western Texas—Dryness of the Atmosphere—Anecdote of a Comanche Indian—Climate of the Rio Grande Country—Freedom of Texas from Yellow Fever—Epidemic at Galveston and Houston—Salutary Effects of Cultivation—Descendants of poor Emigrants in the United States—Kentucky and Texas compared by a Kentuckian—Climate of the Country west of the Rocky Mountains.

The climate of Texas, the most southerly part of which lies within two degrees and a half of the tropic, is as varied as the productive qualities of the soil, and is, perhaps, on the whole, superior to that of any other portion of North America. In Texas Proper, it is neither so cold in winter, nor so hot in summer, as in the north-eastern section of the United States.

On the coast, especially near the large river bottoms, which are occasionally overflowed, the climate is similar to the neighbouring state of Louisiana, but with an ample abatement of its injurious influences. The forests are free from the rank undergrowth of the woody districts of Lower Louisiana, as the level region generally is from those putrid swamps, the exhalations from which, under

the rays of a burning sun, poison the atmosphere, and produce sickness and death. In Texas, from river to river, the country is an open, mild acclivity; in Louisiana and Mississippi, from river to river, it is a compactly wooded level, retaining the waters of the annual inundations, which, acted upon by a dense vegetation and a powerful solar heat, generate noxious miasma, the certain cause of malignant fevers. In the low, alluvial parts of Texas, intermittent fevers frequently prevail; but to these visitations all new countries are subject, particularly where, by the clearing of the timbered land, the rays of the sun first break upon the vegetable deposit of ages. Intermittent fever, or "fever and ague," as it is vulgarly termed, is the general penalty attached to settlements in the "bush," from the St. Lawrence to the Sabine. But this disease, though it enfeebles by oft-recurring attacks, is not directly fatal, and, with the progress of population and improvement, it gradually diminishes, and ultimately disappears.

The winds, during December, January, February, and March, are generally from E.N.E. and N. and N.W.; for the remainder of the year, from the west and south-west. An occasional "norther," of two or three days' continuance, will occur during the summer months, and this, which is more sensibly felt upon the land than upon the sea in the immediate vicinity of the coast, is generally accompanied by heavy rain and thunder, and sometimes by a peppering hail-storm. The prevailing summer wind from the south-west is both healthy and agreeable, and tempers the warmth of July and August with

its grateful and constant play. While the mid-summer air of the alluvial region of the Mississippi is surcharged with noxious moisture, the clear atmosphere of Texas is quickened and renovated by invigorating breezes from the blue expanse of ocean which, passing over the dry, rolling, and verdant surface of the interior, enliven the spirits, and induce a love of existence, even for the passive physical enjoyment it affords.

But for these refreshing breezes, which, during six months, blow almost without intermission, the summer heat of the low lands would certainly be oppressive and pernicious. By thermometer calculations, made throughout the season, from April to September, for a period of three years, and in different sections of the country, the mercury has been found to range from 63° to 100°: average heat, nine o'clock in the morning, 73°; twelve o'clock, noon, 83°; three o'clock, afternoon, 77°. But the graduation of the thermometer can convey no accurate idea of the climate of Texas to those who have never experienced its effects. From the same degree of heat which in New Orleans was overpowering and relaxing, I suffered comparatively little inconvenience, even in Houston, a town situated in a low-lying and rather insalubrious prairie. So steady, bracing, and cooling was the breeze, that it not only mitigated the heat, but enabled me to take pedestrian exercise with safety in the open prairie at mid-day in the fervid month of June; and so potent was this affectionate and welcome wind, that I was obliged, when writing, to close the southern window of my apartment, to prevent my

books and papers from being whirled off the table where they lay. At such times it would have been no easy task to have carried an expanded umbrella across the prairie. From the 1st of April to the close of September, these benignant breezes commence soon after sunrise, and continue until three or four o'clock in the afternoon, when they gradually die away, and as they decline, the elasticity of the spirits sustains a corresponding depression. After sunset, a light breeze again springs up, the atmosphere grows cooler until midnight, and increases in coolness until early morn, when the covering of an English bed at the same season is by no means unacceptable to the wooer of repose.

The sweet south-western breeze, which is so accessory to health and comfort on the level region of the coast, may almost be termed an unmingled luxury among the cool springs, translucent streams, wooded "bottoms," "islands" of timber, and flower-spangled prairies of the rolling country. The greater proportion of this beautiful region, which has obtained for Texas the name of the "Italy of America," is blessed with a temperature delightful to the sense, and favourable to life, and to most of the products which render life agreeable. Here, the mildness of the seasons enables the planter to "pick" all the cotton he can raise, to grow as much corn as he requires, and to accumulate stock of every description, almost without labour or expense. The drought that pervades the season from the close of April to September is often mollified by copious and refreshing showers, which sometimes distribute their favours very unequally. The un-

equal distribution of rain is indeed considered by husbandmen the chief defect in the climate of Texas. One section of the country is frequently saturated by teeming showers, while, at the distance of only a few miles, the ground is gaping for moisture. At such a time, by keeping to the open prairie, remote from the water-courses, whose circumjacent woods attract the clouds drifted by the wind from the gulf, the traveller may pursue his course, and see the rain at intervals descending around him, and leaving himself untouched. Not so, however, at other periods of the year. Then, wet weather is general, and in the early spring predominates, especially on the coast, where it breaks up the roads, swells the streams, and sometimes injures the stock, and retards the preparations of the agriculturist. From March to October, comparatively little rain falls, and the constant action of the sun upon a dry, open, elevated surface, causes a regular influx of air from the sea.

"On the eastern coast of New Spain," says Humboldt, "the great heats are occasionally interrupted by strata of cold air brought by the winds from Hudson's Bay, towards the parallels of Havannah and Vera Cruz. These impetuous winds blow from October to March, and they frequently cool the air to such an extent, that at Havannah, the thermometer descends to 32° of Fahrenheit, and at Vera Cruz, to 60°, a prodigious fall for countries in the torrid zone." In Texas, the strong "northers" set in about the month of November; and in December and January the cold north winds sweep down the plains with nearly as much regularity as the south-

west wind in summer. In these ungenial months, the southerly winds sometimes interpose their kindly agencies, but only for a short time, being soon followed by rain, the sure precursor of a "norther." Early and late in the winter season, the "northers" usually blow from the north-east; in mid-winter, from the north-west. The effect of these winds, in changing the depth of the tide-water of the bays, is singular, and applies to the whole line of coast.

The author of "The Emigrant's Guide to Texas" mentions that, in travelling on the Brazos on the 3d of January, 1840, he was struck "with the perfect freshness and greenness of the grass, which wore more the appearance of a flowering spring than the rigors of mid-winter. In the woodlands, the birds were singing with all the vivacity and sweetness of spring, the weather was as mild as a northern May, or June, and woodpeckers, of which there were many varieties, were heard in every direction."—On the 5th of January, the same writer observes in his Journal, "The sun rose this morning with a light and warmth resembling some of the finest weather in May, in the city of New York. We breakfasted with our kind and hospitable host with the doors wide open. The air was balmy and soft, and no disposition was felt to approach a fire more than in mid-summer. As if to complete the image of spring, a blue bird was heard just by carolling its sweet song." In February and March, the fall of rain diminishes, and the high southerly winds are of longer duration. At this season, owing to the variation of the winds, the weather is extremely capricious, at one time as balmy as a mild mid-summer,

and suddenly again as chill as extreme winter. Notwithstanding the severity of the "northers," the winters are generally as moderate as the month of November in the northern states of the American Union. Ice is seldom seen, except in the districts towards the north, and snow is a rare and transient visitor. Warmer clothing and less airy apartments than those of summer are certainly required, but the trees preserve their foliage and the plains their verdure. Estimated by its effects on a bountiful soil, the climate of Texas may fairly claim to be entitled a perpetual summer, admitting, as it does of two or three crops a year of fruits and vegetables, in great abundance and perfection. Two gardens are common—one for spring and summer, and one for autumn and winter; and peaches, figs, and other tropical fruits are plentiful even to the middle of October. These remarks apply to all Texas Proper, but not to the district bordering on the territory of New Mexico, where the winters begin to be of northern severity. New Mexico itself, although under the same latitude as Syria and the Morea, has a rigorous winter, and frost is not unfrequent, even in the middle of May. Near Santa Fé, and a little farther south, under the parallel of the Morea, the Rio Grande is sometimes covered, for a succession of years, with ice thick enough to admit the passage of horses and carriages. Pike mentions that he found snow a foot deep on the eastern bank of the Rio Grande, near Albuquerque, in latitude 35° 30′, as late as the 6th of March.

The "northers," which are peculiar to Texas, and the eastern coast of Mexico, generally follow a few days of rain and southerly winds. They burst forth

suddenly, with a gust of wind which almost checks respiration, and seems to dry up all moisture of the skin; severe cold immediately succeeds, and the thermometer frequently falls ten or twelve degrees within half an hour. Their average duration is three days; the clouds generally disappear a few hours after their commencement, leaving a clear, cold sky. Coming from a point west by north, they depress the mercury in the thermometer lower than easterly winds, but they are regarded as less prejudicial to health. During the summer months, "northers" are of rare occurrence, and their rude visits are not an unmixed evil, as they tend much to purify the air. The shelter of the groves and woods affords sufficient protection to cattle from their assaults.

The vernal season in Texas Proper begins to shed its cheering influences about the end of February; then the weather, though variable, is often delightful, and the Texans boast that March in the young republic equals in amenity "the glad green month of May" in New York and the adjacent states. To persons of northern habits, April and October are the most pleasant and attractive periods of the year, both with respect to climate and scenery. The stranger who journeys along the low lands of the Brazos, during the drenching days of the short winter of Texas, when the natural roads over the rich alluvial soil are broken into sloughs, and the creeks swollen into unfordable torrents, will probably anathematise the country and its eulogists, and perhaps, as some have done, abandon it altogether in disgust. But were the same person to arrive in spring or autumn, and mounting a good horse, ascend from the coast

to the interior, where the path winds along limpid brooks and gentle vales, through a wilderness of flowers, varied by clustering evergreens and fairy groves, his heart could hardly fail to dilate with emotions of grateful joyousness and to ejaculate, in the silent temple of Nature, "Methinks it is good to be here!"

To the swarms of medical practitioners that yearly issue from the universities and colleges of Europe, Texas offers little encouragement as a field of professional speculation. There is no malady that can be properly called endemic, and the febrile diseases which usually afflict early settlers, especially in southern latitudes, are of a mild type, completely within the control of medicine, and generally to be avoided by the observance of a few simple rules of living. Emigrants accustomed to northern habits should, at least until they are thorougly "acclimated," shun undue exposure to the noonday sun, exercise caution in the use of fruit and salted food, abstain from ardent spirits, and refrain, as much as possible, from drinking, save at meals. To persons new to the climate, occasional cathartics, followed by the use of bark, are beneficial. Very frequently, the injurious effects attributed to climate are caused by intemperance, or the neglect of some of those precautions of which the climate of every latitude demands its peculiar share. If any part of Texas can be termed sickly, it is the narrow strip of country running parallel to the gulf, where in the low, timbered bottoms, the rivers deposit the accumulations of their annual overflows. In this section, to which Providence has granted exuberant fertility, in com-

pensation of its comparative insalubrity, settlers are liable to be attacked by bilious and intermittent fevers; but after receding some distance from the coast, no part of the globe is more friendly to the regular action of the human frame. The towns immediately on the coast, within the direct range of the trade winds, are healthy, although rather trying to temporary sojourners from cold climes, during the months of June, July, and August. Pulmonary consumption, so destructive in England and the northern states of the American Union, is almost unknown in Texas. Rheumatisms and chronic diseases are not prevalent, and nine-tenths of the Republic are considered healthier than the most healthy parts of the United States. In the opinion of respectable medical men, a residence in this country would be as favourable to persons of a consumptive tendency as the South of Europe, or Madeira. As a general fact, it may be stated that the farther from the lands bordering on the coast, the more salubrious is the locality, and persons who arrive in summer will be quite safe by retiring fifty or sixty miles inland. Western Texas is best adapted to a northern constitution; and above the falls of the Brazos, or in the region lying about seventy miles above the mouths of the rivers westward of the Brazos, natives of Great Britain may settle with at least as fair a prospect of longevity as they had at home. The district comprehended in the Mexican "department" of Bexar is of remarkable salubrity. It rarely freezes in winter, and in summer, the heat by the thermometer seldom exceeds 85°. The water is delicious, the sky rarely clouded, and the breezes as

exhilarating as Champaigne, and far more invigorating. Many Mexicans, residing in the vicinity of San Antonio, have attained the patriarchal term of one hundred years, in the full possession of health. When the commissioners, appointed to select the seat of the government of the Republic, visited Bastrop on the Colorado, they were, in proof of its salubrity, shown the grave-yard of the town, which had no more than eleven tenants, although the place had been settled above seven years, and comprised a population of several hundred souls. I have heard planters jocularly remark, in reference to the qualities of the atmosphere in North-western Texas, that it was possible for men to *petrify* there, but not to *putrefy*. To those who are familiar with the region alluded to, this hardly seems an exaggeration. Bonnell, in his Topography of Texas, after describing a petrified forest at the sources of the Pasigono, mentions " a set of petrified waggon wheels on the upper Presidio road, between the Rio Frio and the Nueces. They are on a high hill, and the country could not have been covered with water since they were left there. These wheels," he adds, " were seen by Captain Lewis of the first regiment of regular infantry, and several other Americans." Fresh meat, intended for use in short expeditions, has been cured merely by exposure to the dry searching atmosphere, similar to the practice which prevails under the climate of Buenos Ayres. The Honourable D. G. Burnett, Vice-President of Texas, has recorded the following illustration of the salubrity of the north-western Section of the Republic.

" A Comanche Indian, whose blanched locks and

furrowed cheeks betokened the pelting of at least a hundred winter storms, and who, from the best intelligence I could obtain from himself and others, was not less than a century old, was thrown from his horse, while chasing a herd of buffalos over rough and stony ground, and had his leg broken between the knee and the ankle joints, and was otherwise considerably bruised. I saw him not long after the accident happened; the broken joint was neatly splintered and stayed; and in one month from the day of his fall he was on horseback again."

It may be assumed, however, that the active and unvitiated habits of the Indian hunter, as well as a propitious climate, contributed materially both to his longevity and his cure.

The southern district lying between the Medina and the Rio Grande is not less favourable to health than Texas Proper, as appears from the following extract from the Report of Mr. Egerton to the Directors of the Rio Grande Land Company.

" The healthiness of the climate, I conceive, does not admit of a doubt. I speak both from information derived from others, and from personal experience, which has been considerable. I have been exposed to every vicissitude of weather known here. I have ridden from morning till night, in the summer season, when the thermometer in the shade would have stood at between 90° to 100°, and, at night, lay down in the open prairie, whilst a strong dew, or perhaps a heavy rain, was falling the greater part of the night, soaking nearly every thread of my bed and bedding. The next night I had probably lain down with these but partially dry;

in this way I have been for days together, wearing wet or damp things without the possibility of avoiding it. I have been equally exposed to perhaps the severest cold ever experienced here—of course, all this has been attended with great personal inconvenience, but never had the slightest ill effect on my health; and this, indeed, is universally the case.

"The length of the day, of course, varies but little throughout the year, and the cold is never such as to render fires absolutely *necessary*, although, frequently such, in the winter, as to render them very *desirable*, and, for *comfort*, necessary. Wood fuel, of the first kind, is everywhere found, as well as bituminous coal near the Rio Grande."

"In no part of Texas," observes Almonte, in his *Noticia Estadistica Sobre Tejas*, "is *vomito prieto*, or yellow fever known." Until the autumn of 1839, there was no instance on record of the pest of Vera Cruz and New Orleans having visited Texas. About the latter part of September, in that year, an epidemic appeared in the towns of Galveston and Houston, which Dr. Ashbel Smith, an eminent medical practitioner, who treated a number of cases, pronounced to be yellow fever. In Galveston the disease was confined exclusively to the Strand, a street contiguous to a low, muddy, and undrained part of the beach, where the filth which business and population engender had, from a deficiency in the police regulations, been permitted to accumulate. It is doubtful whether the fever were imported from New Orleans, or originated in local causes. The constant intercourse between Galveston and New Orleans, and the prevalence of yellow fever at the latter

city in the autumn, would lead to the conclusion that the disease was introduced from that quarter: in confirmation of this view, I have been assured that no person died of the disease who had not recently visited New Orleans. On the other hand, its being limited to persons much exposed in the infected district, and the frequent removal of the sick from that district to the healthy parts of the city, without producing any extension of the disease in those places, would justify the opinion that it was not contagious, but wholly of local origin. For general healthfulness, Galveston island, including the city, is probably unsurpassed by any place in the world. Exempt from the typhus fevers of cold climates, and the malignant endemics of the miasmatic regions of the south, the few diseases that occur there are, for the most part, of a moderately inflammatory character, and readily yield to the simplest treatment.

Dr. Smith remarks, in a publication on the subject, that yellow fever requires generally for its developement proximity to water and an ardent sun, with, it may be added, a population more or less dense. At the time of its manifestation at Galveston strong easterly winds prevailed, with cloudy weather. "Ten or twelve days after the appearance of the epidemic, it was checked by a fall of the mercury to 67½°, and there was no new case for nearly three days. The disease was at that time confined within very narrow limits. As the temperature became again elevated, new cases appeared, and the limits of the infected district were gradually much extended and extending, when a fall of the mercury to 45° occurred. But the epidemic influ-

ences were now become so inveterate as not to be wholly destroyed by this low temperature, until a "norther" setting in on November 20, depressed the mercury to 40° which it is believed wholly arrested the disease. Had the appropriate sanatory measures been taken at the time the disease was suspended by a fall of the mercury to 67½°, it is reasonable to suppose that it might have been permanently arrested."

Every succeeding year, by extending cultivation and the clearing of the woods in the lower region, with improvements in drainage and the police of towns, will diminish the few existing sources of sickness. At present, Europeans need not be deterred by apprehensions on the score of health, from removing to a country whose powers of production all but anticipate the necessities of man. Clothing adapted to the summer and winter of England is suitable for the warm and wintry seasons of the young republic. Lightly burthened to raise an abundance of all things requisite for comfortable subsistence, the human frame—stunted in its growth and swerved from its fair proportions by the inferior and insufficient food and incessant drudgery, which enfeeble and wear down the physical energies of the depressed and hopeless labourers of Britain, and the states of the old world—will, on the kindly soil and under the fostering temperature of Texas, expand its dimensions, and assume the mould of strength and the symmetry of beauty. In travelling through the United States, I was continually struck by the changes which, in the course of a generation or two, had been effected in the various

[illegible] by transplantation to a land where [illegible] and comparatively independent. In Baltimore, especially, where there has been a considerable immigration of poor Catholic Irish, I was frequently amused by a specimen of the Hiberno-American—the offspring of some laborious exile of Erin—in the state of transition, and wavering, as it were, between his insular descent and his continental nativity. The broad low comedy features and hard scrubby undergrowth of the original ill-fed and hard-worked importation had become grave, elongated, and erect; and, in another generation, the Celtic physiognomy and hard compressed corporeal outline, bade fair to be obliterated in the comparatively austere aspect and tall spare build of the undoubted American. In walking with a republican friend on the quays of New York, I noticed a heap of uncouth and squalid Dutch and Bavarians just deposited from an emigrant ship, and remarked the contrast which their dirty and squab appearance exhibited to the native population. "Such as they are," said my companion, "we shall see their progeny tapering up among us like lilies!" And so it is;—moderate labour, abundant food, useful instruction, and the absence of servile forms, are speedily indicated by the thoughtful look, erect gait, and developed form.

Perhaps in no part of the civilised world is there a race of men more generally large and robust than in the south-western states of the Union, and certainly none more enterprising and energetic.

The gay and fearless spirit of roving enterprise which animates the athletic Kentuckian is proverbial,

yet the soil and climate of his parent State, which nourish the vigour that inspires him with adventurous daring, must yield the palm of excellence to the plains and skies of Texas. On this point I may adduce the testimony of Mr. R. H. Chinn, a Kentucky gentleman of the legal profession, in a published letter addressed to General Combs of Lexington, dated November 15, 1838.

"I have seen almost every acre of the State of Kentucky, and I do believe that Texas has greatly the advantage. The greater part of Texas is, by nature, at once prepared for the plough of the husbandman. About one-third of Kentucky is fertile, and capable of successful settlement and cultivation; nine-tenths of all explored Texas are of that character. And the soil and the climate of Texas can produce advantageously everything which Kentucky can, and many things requisite for the wants of man which Kentucky cannot. * * * * * * * The laborious, expensive, and protracted work of clearing a plantation is necessary in but a few places"—the greater proportion of the country being prairie.

The country west of the Rocky Mountains, which intervenes between Texas and the Pacific, is remarkable for mildness and equability of climate. The rigorous winters and sultry summers, and the capricious inequalities of temperature prevalent on the Atlantic side of the great chain, are but little felt on their western declivities. These, in their descent towards the Southern Ocean, are blest with the temperature of parallel latitudes in Europe. The winters are wet rather than cold. During the rainy

season, which continues from about the middle of October to the middle of March, the prevailing winds are from the south and south-east—the usual harbingers of wet weather. Those from the north to the south-west are the forerunners of clear skies and fair weather. The remainder of the year, from the middle of March to the middle of October, is serene and delightful. Throughout this time there is scarcely any rain; nightly dews and morning fogs, not considered prejudicial to health, preserve the face of the country in freshness and verdure.

CHAPTER IV.

Caution to Emigrants—Authorities favourable to Texas—Natural Productions: Cotton—Sugar-cane—Maize—Vines—Tobacco—Indigo—Cochineal—The Mulberry tree—Potatoes, Sweet and Common—Wheat—Barley—Rice—Vanilla—Fruits and Vegetables—Nuts—Honey—Bees'-wax—Forest Trees and Shrubs—The Cross Timber—Cane-brakes—Plants and Flowers—The Prairies.

New and distant settlements, where the amount of capital and labour bears but a small proportion to the extent of unoccupied land, are seldom without their interested eulogists, skilful in softening defects, or throwing them into the back ground, and painting whatever attractions they may possess in the colours of the rose. On this account, persons who meditate the important act of removal to a new and distant settlement, ought not merely to peruse the various publications intended for the information of emigrants, but endeavour to ascertain the object of their authors in submitting them to the world, and test their pretensions to accuracy, by comparing and weighing the representations of different authorities. In describing the natural resources of Texas, I have, by adducing the testimony of others, adopted a course which will enable my readers to appreciate the trustworthiness of my views and assertions. Indeed, I should be reluctant to convey the ideas I entertain of the beauty and fertility of Texas to my

countrymen, unless I were in a condition to confront incredulity with a body of precedent and unimpeachable evidence. And strong as I am in concurrent authority, I shall not seek, in detailing facts, to increase their effect by straining after any embellishments of language.

Humboldt, whose valuable testimony can hardly be cited too often, thus recapitulates his observations on the general aspect of the Northern Provinces of Mexico :—" We have described the deserts without water which separate New Biscay (Durango) from New Mexico. All the table-land which extends from Sombrercte to the Saltillo, and from thence to La Punta de Lampazos, is a naked and arid plain on which cactus and other prickly plants only vegetate. The sole vestige of cultivation is in some points where, as around the town of Saltillo, industry has procured a little water for irrigating the fields. We have traced a view of Old California, of which the soil is a rock, destitute both of wood and water.* All these considerations tend to prove that, on account of its extreme dryness, a con-

* The peninsula of Old or Lower California, though it is traversed by stern and barren mountains, and has many sandy plains, is not wholly devoid of fertility. " Wherever there is water," says Bonneville, " the ardent nature of the climate quickens everything into astonishing fertility. There are valleys luxuriant with the rich and beautiful productions of the tropics. There the sugar-cane and indigo-plant attain a perfection unequalled in any other part of North America. There flourish the olive, the fig, the date, the orange, the citron, the pomegranate, and other fruits belonging to the voluptuous climates of the south; with grapes in abundance that yield a generous wine. In the interior are salt plains: silver mines and scanty veins of gold are said likewise to exist; and pearls of a beautiful water are to be fished upon the coast."

siderable part of New Spain, north of the Tropic, is not susceptible of a great population. But this aridity, we repeat, is not general, and it is compensated for by the *extreme fertility* observable in the southern countries—even in that part of the *Provincias Internas* in the neighbourhood of rivers —in the basins of the Rio Grande, the Gila (of Upper or New California), the Huaqui, the Majo, the Culiacan, the Rio del Rosario, the Conchas, the Santander, the Tigre, and *the numerous torrents of the Province of Texas*."

Mr. Clay, the distinguished American orator and statesman, in a debate in the United States Congress, in 1820, on the question of the acquisition of Florida from Spain, thus alluded to Texas, to the sovereignty of which he and others contended the United States had a just claim, on the ground of the province having formed a part of Louisiana :—

"All accounts concur in representing Texas to be extremely valuable. Its superficial extent is three or four times greater than that of Florida. The climate is delicious, the soil fertile, the margins of the rivers abounding in live oak, and the country admitting of easy settlement. I am not disposed to disparage Florida, but its intrinsic value is incomparably less than that of Texas."

General Pike, of the United States army, says of Texas, in the published narrative of his travels :—"It has one of the most delightful temperatures in the world. Take it generally, it is one of the richest, most prolific, and best watered countries in North America."

Colonel Langworthy, who visited Texas, from Ver

mont in the United States, in an account of his journey, supports all that had been previously alleged in favour of Texas. He had travelled over "nearly all the Northern States, and Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Louisiana, &c., which were certainly, in relation to soil, climate and productions, entitled to the favourable opinion which has often been expressed with regard to them," but, he unhesitatingly adds—" in goodness of soil, in the extent and variety of her productions, in amenity of climate, in local and commercial advantages, in short, in everything which conduces to the comfort of man, Texas has a decided preference to any new country I have ever seen."

In the able and instructive work on Mexico, published by Mr. H. G. Ward, formerly British *Chargé d'Affaires* at Mexico, and now one of the representatives for Sheffield, Texas is described as " rich in valuable produce, abounding in water, and possessing rivers of sufficient size to ensure to its inhabitants the benefits of internal navigation, which have produced so wonderful an effect, in the course of a few years, in the neighbouring valley of the Mississippi."

General Wavel, an English officer who served in the Mexican army, in a brief but highly favourable account of the country, appended to Mr. Ward's work, observes that, " in the northern part, the climate differs but little from that of the south of Europe, Buenos Ayres and the Cape of Good Hope. To the south, the white settlers from the United States experience no ill effects from the heat of the sun.* Few countries possess so large a proportion of

rich land, or are so capable of supporting a dense population; few are better supplied with navigable rivers, streams, and rivulets. Except along a part of the coast, and on the banks of the Red River, no such inundations take place as to render the adjacent district periodically unhealthy. As in Devonshire, almost every valley has its stream, or brook; and judging from the small fish which I observed in them, I should conceive the greater number to be perennial."

Colonel Almonte, as commissioner to the Mexican Government, thus reports of Texas in 1834: "The abundance of navigable rivers and excellent harbours gives to this country an immense advantage over the other states of the Mexican Republic, which, unfortunately, do not possess similar facilities for exportation, and whose foreign commerce can only be passive for a series of years to come. On the other hand, the climate is perfectly adapted to the inhabitants of Europe, and emigration is so considerable that in less than ten years its population has been quintupled. Lastly—Texas is the bravest division of our Republic, and God grant that, through our own negligence, so valuable a portion of our country may not be lost to us! The territory of Texas is vast, and adapted to the cultivation of cotton, tobacco, the sugar-cane, Indian corn, rice, wheat, potatoes, beans, olives, grapes, &c. The soil best adapted to the growth of cotton and tobacco is to be found on the sections immediately on the coast, and the margins of rivers; that of the more inland districts is better calculated for wheat, olives, sugar-cane, potatoes, &c. But, generally speaking, the produc-

tion of any one part of Texas is common to the whole territory, in greater or less abundance."

The peculiar adaptation of the soil and climate of Texas to the growth of cotton is thus noticed in Captain Marryatt's late work, entitled A Diary in America. "In the southern portion of America, there are millions of acres on which cotton can be successfully cultivated, particularly in Texas, the soil of which is so congenial that they can produce 1000 lbs. to the 400 lbs. raised by the Americans, and the quality of the Texas cotton is said to be equal to the finest Sea-Island. *It is to Texas particularly that we must look for this produce.* * * * * It may be asked, how is it, as Texas is so far south, that a white population can labour there? It is because Texas is a prairie country, and situated at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, a sea breeze always blows across the whole country, rendering it cool, and refreshing it notwithstanding the sun's rays. This breeze is apparently a continuation of the trade winds."

These authorities will probably be deemed sufficient for establishing the general fact of the fertility and attractiveness of Texas. All competent judges who have explored the country agree in the opinion that, for apparent depth and richness, and capability of raising most of the commodities necessary for animal subsistence and enjoyment, the soil of Texas is not surpassed by that of any other country in the Western Hemisphere.

Among the productions which may be considered as naturally adapted to the soil, and which will form important articles of commerce, cotton is pre-emi-

nent. There is a great difference in the value of this article to the spinner, according to the length, flexibility, tenacity and thickness of the filament. The Sea-Island Georgian cotton of the United States, commands the highest price in the Liverpool market, and the product of the low alluvial lands of Texas is said to equal this description in length and fineness. The cotton cultivated in the United States is a plant of annual growth, which the early autumnal frosts destroy, rendering it necessary to clear the ground and form a fresh plantation every year. Mrs. Holley states that in the more genial region of Texas, the plant does not require to be renewed more frequently than once in three or four years, to yield a crop superior in quality and quantity to the annual plantings of Louisiana. But, although the cotton plant propagates itself in the *Tierra Caliente*, or warm region, of Mexico, I have no confidence in its power of retaining its vitality, so as to meet the expectations of the planter, for the time Mrs. Holley specifies, exposed to even the light frosts of Texas. It may, however, be asserted, that the Texan planters possess decided advantages, in two important particulars, over their competitors of the United States—in the general superiority of the article produced, and the excess in amount of production. The average return on the acre is considerably greater in Texas than the States, and the expense of cultivation considerably less. This is owing not more to the greater richness of the soil, than to the superior mildness of the climate. It operates thus:

The cotton plant shoots out a number of branches,

on which grow large and beautiful whitish-yellow blossoms. On the cups of the flower form balls or cocoons, which contain three or four elliptical seeds, about four times as large as a wheat kernel, and of an oily consistence. The cotton is the down that envelopes these oily seeds, from which the wool has to be detached by a circular saw mechanism called a "gin," before it is packed in bales and pressed for exportation. The planting, which takes place at different periods of the spring months, from March to May, is in drill rows, about six feet apart. The crop is carefully thinned, and ploughs, in the form of scrapers, are used to clear out the weeds. In September, the process of "picking" the cotton commences, and it is renewed several times, in successive stages, according to the ripening of the cocoons, or "forms," as they are locally called. Now, the history of cotton cultivation shows that the picking season, in the United States, does not allow the planter to save what he has raised, in consequence of the early frosts; whereas, the long, warm, and dry autumns, and moderate winters of Texas, secure the cotton-grower from those casualties of the seasons which, in the neighbouring States, have often crippled and paralyzed the planting interest.

Cotton planting commences in February in Texas, and picking begins at an earlier and continues for a longer period than in the United States. It has been noted as a remarkable fact in North Alabama, that a single cotton blossom had been discovered in a field as early as the 4th of July. In the same year, between the 25th and 30th of June, one hun-

dred and nineteen blossoms were counted upon a single stalk of cotton on the Caney in Texas. Superior cotton-growing lands will yield from one and a half to two bales of clean cotton to the acre.

The picking of cotton affords an easy and beneficial employment to females and children. On a plantation at Columbia on the Brazos, twenty young girls and boys picked, on an average, 153 lbs. each per day, during a week. Children from the age of nine or ten, who are unfit for any other occupation, may be employed in the picking season almost as effectually as grown-up persons.

In every district of Texas, from the Sabine to the Rio Grande, and from the Gulf of Mexico to the bottoms of the Red River, cotton grows with extraordinary facility. Its cultivation hitherto has been chiefly on the Brazos and Colorado, Red and Trinity Rivers, and Caney Creek. Practical men have expressed the belief that Sea-Island, or black seed, cotton would produce well two hundred miles inland; but I am strongly inclined to think that the rich level region of the coast is its proper field, and that the green seed cotton will thrive best in the interior.

Texan cotton has been, for some time, shipped direct to Liverpool in British bottoms, and its cultivation is steadily advancing.

The sugar-cane, which grows abundantly in Louisiana, possesses a still more congenial soil and climate in the level region of Texas. As the extent of the crop depends upon the number of joints that ripen before the frost sets in, the greater mildness of the Texan autumn ensures a larger return than in

the United States. The light frosts of Texas do not injure the cane, but rather assist the fermentation of sugar from the sap, whereas the hopes of the planter are frequently blasted by the late and early frosts of Louisiana. The cane of Texan growth has, also, an ampler and taller stalk than that of Louisiana, sweetens higher up, and supplies the saccharine matter in larger proportions and in greater purity. It has been found to sweeten seven feet above the ground. I have seen an estimate of the produce of sugar in a small plantation, which, notwithstanding the waste arising from very imperfect machinery, gave about 3,500 lbs. to the acre. The cultivation of the sugar-cane demands a larger capital than cotton-planting, and the work is more severe on the labourers, requiring, when commenced, to be continued night and day. The coolness of the nights in Texas would materially lessen its prejudicial effects, and consequently diminish the expense of production. The cultivation of the cane is yet in its infancy, the attention of the agriculturists being chiefly devoted to the raising of cotton and Indian corn. It is stated, in Flint's History and Geography of the Valley of the Mississippi, that the superiority in profit of sugar over cotton, as an article of production in Louisiana, has been proved by accurate tables, giving the number of hands, the amount of expenditure, and the average return from each for a consecutive number of years. The Riband and the Creole cane are considered of nearly equal productiveness; but the former requires to be planted every three years, ferments less readily, and has a harder rind than the latter, which continues to

grow from the roots for more than ten years. The Brazos river waters a greater extent of sugar land, and of a better quality than the Mississippi, and the Brazos does not drain one-fourth of the sugar lands of Texas. The top of the cane stalk makes excellent fodder for cattle and horses.

Maize, or Indian corn, yields a large and profitable return, with little expenditure or trouble. The average crop, on good land, is from fifty to sixty bushels per acre, but seventy-five bushels have been frequently gathered; and Parker in his 'Trip to the West,' mentions that he found in Eastern Texas, "a man who, with the aid of a boy ten years old, raised and gathered in one year 1500 bushels." Two crops may be gathered annually, the first of which is usually planted in February, the second late in June. In general, the ground is lightly ploughed, and run over with the hoe at different periods, and crops have been obtained on the prairies merely by dibbling holes and dropping in the seed. A crop of wheat, equal in quality to the finest Kentucky, has been cut in May on land in Western Texas, and the same land has yielded a heavy crop of Indian corn in the ensuing October. The corn is generally worth from one dollar and a half to two dollars per bushel, at the farms, and from two to three dollars per bushel in the market. The constant influx of new settlers ensures a ready sale for an article capable of sustaining all the live stock of the farm-yard, as well as forming a wholesome article of subsistence to the farmer and his family.

Capital, and the requisite skill and labour, are all that is necessary to place Texas high among the

wine-producing countries. The native grape has a very agreeable flavour, and the vines are sometimes seen festooning and overtopping trees at an elevation of from eighty to one hundred feet. A pleasant wine has been extracted from the indigenous grape, and on sandy ridges unfit for cultivation, vines are abundant. German emigrants, especially from the Rhenish provinces, who usually go to the United States, would obtain a more promising field for their industry in Texas. Almost every variety of grape is found growing spontaneously, particularly about Nacogdoches, in the vicinity of Bastrop, and along the course of the river Guadalupe. In the environs of the Paso del Norte (a post on a ford of the Rio Grande), which, according to Humboldt, resemble the finest parts of Andalusia, the vine has long been cultivated, and produces a wine held in great estimation. In the opinion of the same sagacious observer, the time will arrive when the mountainous parts of Mexico and Central America, will supply wine to the whole American continent, and will become to it, what France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, have long been to the north of Europe.

In the United States attempts have been made to form vineyards, but the result has disappointed the expectations of the speculators, even when assisted by appropriations of public money, as was a Swiss colony at Vevay in Indiana. The failure of the experiment in Indiana has been attributed to the inclemency of the winter, the removal of the duties on foreign wines, and the high rate of wages, compared with the European scale. The first of

these causes of failure would not be felt in Texas. Wherever a sandy prairie rises with a gentle elevation above the neighbouring level, grape-vines spread themselves over the surface, like the vines of pumpkins in a field appropriated to their growth. The best grapes are found upon elevated lands of a sandy, or gravelly, character.

The tobacco plant grows luxuriantly and, although a most searching crop, is not capable of exhausting the fertility of the alluvial lands. It thrives only in a light, rich, warm soil, and requires to be planted early in the spring, and gathered late in the autumn.

The indigo plant is indigenous, and only demands careful management to render it a valuable article of export. It has been manufactured for domestic use in Texas, and is considered superior to the product of the United States.

Another valuable dye, for the production of purple and scarlet colours, may be obtained in tracts which do not admit of pasture or tillage. The nopal (*cactus opuntia* or *cochinilefer*) on which the cochineal insect feeds, grows exuberantly in dry and barren localities, attaining frequently a height of fifteen feet, and forming impenetrable thickets. Its fruit is highly prized in the Mexican markets, and furnishes food for herds of cattle and wild horses. Cochineal forms an important article of Mexican commerce. There are two sorts, the *grana fina*, or fine grain, and the wild, or *grana sylvestris;* the latter being the easier to cultivate, but of inferior quality. Wild cochineal is collected six times, the

fine or cultivated, only three times in the year. The insect is small, and is detached from the plant on which it feeds, by the tail of a rabbit, or a blunt knife. The last gathering is the least valued, the cochineal being then smaller and mixed with the shavings of the nopal. When collected, they are killed by immersion in boiling water, after which they are dried and exported in bags. On the manner of drying chiefly depends the quality of the colour to be obtained; that which is dried in the sun is the best. In the year 1831, nearly 100,000lbs. weight of cochineal were shipped from Mexico to England. Colonel Almonte states, that wild cochineal of good quality, with abundance of nopal, is found in the "Department" of Bexar. This cochineal has usually sold for from four to six rials per pound (about two and three shillings British money) at the posts of Loredo and Rio Grande.

The mulberry tree is of common growth and thrives vigorously in Western Texas, the climate of which is well adapted to the rearing of silkworms. A successful experiment in the production of silk was made, under the Spanish Government, at San Antonio de Bexar. The cultivation of silk would afford an easy and advantageous occupation to females and children.

Sweet potatoes, which are much prized, are plentiful, the superior prairie lands yielding from four to five hundred bushels to the acre. The common potato of Europe is equally productive, and of good quality. The crops planted in February generally yield a plentiful supply in April and May; those

planted during the heats of summer, are small and less productive. This esculent is indigenous in Texas, but the wild tubers are of inferior quality.

The low alluvial lands are not suited to the culture of wheat, which there runs to stalk and fills badly, but it can be raised advantageously in the interior, towards the west. Mexican wheat, a superior grain to that of the United States, has yielded very well on the Upper Colorado.

Barley may be raised on the light mellow soil of the sloping prairies and post oak lands, and the rolling districts will supply oats, rye, and buckwheat, more than sufficient for home consumption. Rice has been cultivated, and doubtless would be an extensive article of export from the humid low lands, if its cultivation on a large scale ensured returns equivalent to those of the great staples of the country. Experiment has proved that the culture of flax and hemp will not disappoint the expectations of the agriculturist in the undulating and hilly region.

The Epidendrum Vanilla, a species of vine extensively cultivated in Mexico, and producing a fruit valuable in commerce, is adapted to the climate and soil of Texas. The fruit of the Vanilla is exported to Europe from Mexico and Brazil, and is used in confectionary, but chiefly for mixing with and perfuming chocolate. The pod is about eight or ten inches long, of a yellow colour when gathered, and dark brown or black, when exported. It is wrinkled on the outside, and is full of a vast number of black seeds, like grains of sand, having, when prepared, a peculiar and delicious fragrance.

Much caution is requisite in curing it, so as to save it from corrupting, or exuding its odorous oil too copiously.

Texas is bountifully supplied with fruits and garden produce, and although the climate of the low lands is rather too warm for the apple, there is scarcely any other fruit of temperate climes that will not, with moderate care, arrive at perfection. Peaches of unrivalled size and flavour, excellent melons, delicious figs, oranges, lemons, apricots, pine-apples, quinces, plums, pawpaws, dates, almonds, bananas, plaintains, olives and spices, may be grown in different localities with little cost. Beans, peas, cucumbers, carrots, onions, pumpkins, turnips, lettuce, and other useful vegetables, including a variety peculiar to the country, may be raised abundantly.

The woods produce the best kinds of nuts; those of the pecan are especially delicious, and find a ready market. The preservation of the pecan-tree is the only thing requisite to ensure the farmer a store both for consumption and exportation. Three or four active children may, without difficulty, gather above a hundred bushels of these nuts in a few weeks of autumn.

Among the countless flowers of the prairie, honey bees delight to range, and swarms of the busy little creatures have their haunts in every district. The best bees-wax and honey may be obtained in large quantities for the trouble of tracing the insects to their homes, and felling the trees, in the hollows of which they lodge their treasure. There are persons who acquire by experience singular skill in coursing the bee, and who follow "bee-hunting" as a profitable

vocation. White, or bleached wax, is an article of great consumption in the Mexican churches, where the burning of huge candles forms a part of the religious ceremonial. It commands, consequently, a high price in Mexico, and the annual importation from Havannah has been calculated, from official documents, at 600,000 lbs. It is not uncommon for the bee-hunters to secure the wax and reject the honey, as over-abundant and of comparatively little value. It is alleged by the woodsmen, as a fact in the history of the bees, that they are never found in an utterly wild country, but always move in advance of civilisation. Such is the belief of the Indians, who, on the appearance of these insects, remark—"There come the white men!"

An ample supply of timber can be obtained in Texas for use and ornament, and there is sufficient material for planting hedges calculated to make valuable fences in a very few years. The rail fences of the United States and Canada are expensive and unsightly, and cause a great waste of wood, which, in a country containing a large extent of prairie, ought to be avoided. The forests and groves of Texas include all descriptions of trees found in the United States, with many peculiar to the soil. Live oak (*quercus semper virens*), so valuable for ship-building, is more abundant than in any other part of the American continent of equal extent. The wood of this oak is almost incorruptible, and its acorns are excellent feeding for swine. A specimen of this majestic tree at Bolivar, measured sixteen feet in circumference, retaining this amplitude more than thirty feet from

the ground; some have attained a circumference of twenty-three feet. The strong and durable timber of the live oak must form a most important article of export for the use of the foreign ship builder. Large quantities of it have been used for the frames of ships of war by the naval department of the United States, and precautions are adopted for the preservation of the trees. Of late years, however, it has been found difficult to collect the supplies wanted by the Government, for the construction of new vessels, from the woods of Florida. White, red, black, Spanish, and post oak, are common; the first of these is one of the most useful American trees. There are also ash, cypress, red cedar, cotton tree, china tree, cherry, elm, gum, hackberry, hawthorn, hickory, holly, locust, linden, sugar maple, musquit (a species of the acacia), pecan, spruce pine, pitch or yellow pine *(pinus palustris)*, persimmon, poplar, sycamore, walnut, bois d'Arc, or bow wood, and willow, besides many others, with a great variety of shrubs. Among the latter, may be enumerated a species of laurel locally called, "wild peach," sumach, chinquepin (or dwarf chestnut), juniper, sassafras, red bud, hog wood, the yawpan or tea tree, wild plum, palmetto, prickly ash, canebrake, supple jack, raspberry, blackberry, whortleberry, cranberry, &c. The caoutchouc, or India rubber tree, has been discovered above Bastrop, on the timber lands of the river Colorado. The larger trees near the water courses are sometimes wreathed with Spanish or long moss, a parasitic vegetation of a silver grey colour, shrouding the foliage and displaying a sombre funereal aspect, instead of the

cheerful appearance of the verdure which it conceals. In delightful contrast to this funereal drapery, is the superb Magnolia Grandiflora, bearing flowers of brilliant white at the extremities of its young branches, and not unfrequently rising to the height of eighty or ninety feet.

Good cheap beds have been made of the Spanish moss. The only preparation requisite is to steep it in hot water, or to let it remain in cold water to rot, like flax or hemp, after which it is dried, whipped, and put into the tick. Horses, cattle, and deer will feed upon the moss in the winter season. When dried it resembles horse-hair, and is exported for the use of upholsterers and coach-makers.

The Cross Timber of Northern Texas, which may be deemed one of the natural curiosities of the country, forms a remarkable feature in its topography. The following description of it is founded upon information furnished by respectable persons who have resided for several years in its vicinity, have visited nearly every portion of the adjoining districts, and examined it throughout its whole extent.

The Cross Timber is a continuous series of forests, extending from the woody region at the sources of the Trinity, in a direct line north, across the apparently interminable prairies of northern Texas and the Ozark territory, to the southern bank of the Arkansas river. This belt of timber varies in width from five to fifty miles. Between the Trinity and Red River it is generally from five to nine miles wide, and is so remarkably straight and regular, that it appears to be a work of art. When viewed from the adjoining prairies on the east or west, it

appears in the distance like an immense wall of woods stretching from south to north in a straight line, the extremities of which are lost in the horizon. There appears to be no peculiarity in the surface of the ground over which the Cross Timber passes, to distinguish it from the surface of the adjoining country; but, where the country is level, the region traversed by the Cross Timber is level; where it is undulating, and where it is hilly, that also is uneven, conforming in every respect to the general features of the adjoining country. The trees composing these forests are not distinguishable by any peculiarity from those which are occasionally found in the adjoining prairies, or in the bottoms bordering the streams which intersect the Cross Timber. Oak, hickory, elm, white oak, post oak, holly and other trees are found in it. The elm is often found growing luxuriantly far from any stream, and in apparently poor and sandy soil. The black jack, a species of oak, is met with throughout its whole extent, from the Arkansas to the "Black Jack Ridges," at the sources of the Trinity.

The Cross Timber, in its general direction, does not perceptibly vary from the true meridian. Dr. Irion (formerly Secretary of State of the Republic), a few years since accompanied a party of surveyors, who measured a line extending forty miles due south from the bank of Red River, near the Cross Timber, and found, to their surprise, that the western border of the Cross Timber continued parallel with this line through the whole distance. As might naturally be supposed, the Cross Timber forms the great landmark of the western prairies; and the Indians and hunters, when describing their routes

across the country, in their various expeditions, refer to the Cross Timber, as the navigators of Europe refer to the meridian of Greenwich. If they wish to furnish a sketch of the route taken in any expedition, they first draw a line representing the Cross Timber, and another representing the route taken, intersecting the former. Thus a simple, but correct, map of the portion of country traversed in the expedition is at once presented to view.

The remarkable uniformity which characterises the Cross Timber, and its apparently artificial arrangement, under a particular meridian, has induced some persons to believe that it is a work of art, and owes its origin to the unknown race of men who have erected the mounds and ancient fortifications of the Mississippi valley. It is difficult to conceive, however, for what useful purpose it could have been intended, unless as a land-mark to distinguish the boundary between two nations. But whether it be the work of art or of nature, will probably never be determined. The lines of civilisation are rapidly extending towards it, and soon the scrutiny of science will be for ever checked by the destroying axe of the pioneer.

In the distribution of the timber of Texas for the purposes of the settler, Nature seems to have provided for each section of the Republic with a liberality proportioned to its general necessities. Wood is very abundant east of the Trinity River, where there is a considerable extent of wet prairie and poor land. Between the Trinity and the Brazos, the woods, woodlands, and prairies are nearly equal in respective value. The stiff clay soil of the south-

ern section between the Brazos and the Colorado is overstocked with timber, while the northern section, where the open prairie greatly predominates over the woodland, is equally rich in soil and more easily tilled. The tract lying between the Colorado and the Guadalupe is pretty nearly divisible into equal portions of pasture land and arable prairie, with fertile timbered bottoms. West of the Guadalupe, the comparative deficiency of wood is counterbalanced by a fair proportion of good arable land, with a superabundance of the finest pasturage.

The pine woods of the south-east afford an ample supply of first-rate timber; some pine trees have measured three feet in circumference, fifty feet from the butt. The red cedar which grows in insulated clumps, particularly on the uplands between the rivers, is applicable to most domestic uses, and is said to last thirty years. In the north-west, on the upper waters of the Guadalupe, the hard, close-grained, black walnut is the prevailing growth, and affords an excellent material for ornamental work and household furniture. Post oak and jack oak are useful for fencing and fuel. In addition to the black and white thorn, the China tree, with its brilliant verdure and beautiful blossoms, and the evergreen wild peach, properly planted, form hedges capable of repelling all four-footed intruders, and very beneficial in the alluvial lands.

The cotton-wood tree, groves of which sometimes fringe the banks of streams, and clothe the low alluvions, is large and extremely tall, resembling the Lombardy poplar in shape and foliage. It is more ornamental than useful, but possesses the re-

commendation to the settler of yielding readily to the axe. It is of remarkably rapid growth.

The Musquit-tree, a species of dwarf locust, growing on the sloping uplands, and most frequently met with west of the Guadalupe, where other kinds of timber are scarce, bears a pod much valued by the Mexicans for fattening hogs. The tree itself is hard and durable, and is an excellent material for the posts of rail fences.

The Bois d'Arc, of which the Indians make their bows, is of a beautiful yellow colour, and exceedingly tough and elastic. It is often found four feet in diameter and eighty feet in height. It bears a fruit resembling an orange, but larger, on which horses, hogs, and horned cattle eagerly feed.

The quantities of wood required for steam-boat fuel will impart a high value to the timbered lands bordering the navigable rivers. The best kinds of wood for steam-boat consumption are oak, beech, and ash. Cotton-wood gives a lively fire, but is too quick in combustion. Hickory, which is the best domestic fuel, is useless for steam-boats. It is necessary to split steam-boat wood fine, and keep it until perfectly dry. The price of the wood is governed by many circumstances, but the clear average gain from an acre of woodland on the western rivers has been estimated at 150 dollars.

On the best lands of the Brazos valley, and more or less on all the river-bottoms, is an undergrowth of cane, frequently so thick as to be almost impervious to man. This cane grows to a height of twenty or twenty-five feet, affording, when green, excellent food for cattle, and, when burnt or de-

cayed, a rich manure to the soil. Cane-brakes indicate a dry soil of the richest character, above the point of inundation. The most extensive cane-brake of Texas is on Caney Creek, between the Brazos and the Colorado; there the canes extend several miles in breadth, with but few trees among them, for a distance of sixty miles. On the paths opened through the young plants, men on horseback have passed, shaded by the green over-arching and interlacing reeds. No other vegetable production furnishes a more rich or abundant fodder, or one more grateful to cattle. It springs from the ground like the finest asparagus, with long green leaves and a large succulent stem, and grows to the height of six feet before it acquires the woody fibre. When the cane is cut down and burnt, the ground is in the very best condition for a crop of Indian corn. With the addition of the wild rye, which is sweet and nutritious, it supplies a never-failing winter pasture, when the prairie grass is young. The ripened stems sell well in the Northern States for fishing-rods.

The whole face of the country, woodland and prairie, upland and bottom, is verdant with grass. The indigenous grass of the prairies is tall and coarse, and full of seed at the top; when young, and before it has thrown up its stems, it resembles the early growth of wheat. If designed for store-fodder, it should be cut before it has lost its tenderness. A grass, similar to the "blue grass" of the Western States, yielding a fine soft sward, and preserving its verdure in winter, affords the best pasturage in Texas. It retains its nutritive qualities

after it has become dry and apparently dead. This grass is plentiful wherever the musquit-tree abounds, as west of the Guadalupe, hence its local name of "Musquit grass." In the hilly region, the herbage is tender and well adapted for sheep. The "gama" grass of the Mexicans is indigenous in Texas, as are some varieties of clover.

Texas presents a fruitful field for the labours of the botanist. To the unscientific eye, its multitudinous array of plants and flowers would seem to defy calculation and arrangement. Many of the northern garden-flowers and hot-house exotics bloom spontaneously on the prairies; amongst others, the dahlia, the trumpet-flower, the geranium, heart's-ease, lupin, several varieties of the lily and digitalis, lady's slipper, anemone, jessamine, golden rod, lobelia cardinalis, the passion-flower, &c. Of the rose, numerous varieties, including perpetual, monthly, and multiflora, yield their sweetness, without exacting from man any care in return. Primroses, violets, and the delicate flower of the ground-apple, are common embellishments of the soil. The slopes ascending from the water-courses are often entirely overrun with the elastic and delicate *mimosa sensitiva*, which shrinks and contracts its leaves, to the distance of many feet in advance of the approaching wayfarer.

The open, wood-girdled lands, which the early French settlers in the Mississippi valley distinguished by the name of "prairies," or meadows, and which are called "savannas" by the Spaniards, form the characteristic feature of the landscape of Texas, in common with the scenery of Illinois, and some other

Western States. In Texas, the prairies vary in extent from one hundred to many thousand acres. Their superior elevation, which, with the porous quality of the soil, facilitates drainage, renders them more healthy than the prairies of Illinois, on which the waters lodge until evaporated by the heat of the sun. These natural lawns of Texas rise into moderate eminences that terminate in woodland, and afford building sites singularly picturesque and beautiful. In the expressive language of the Western country, the surface of the prairies is termed "rolling," from its supposed resemblance to the long, heavy swell of the ocean, when its waves are subsiding after a storm.

"The attraction of the prairie," says the author of Statistics of the West, "consists in its extent, its carpet of verdure and flowers, its undulating surface, its groves, and the fringe of timber by which it is surrounded. Of all these, the last is the most expressive feature; it is that which gives character to the landscape,—which imparts the shape, and marks the boundary of the plain. If the prairie be small, its greatest beauty consists in the vicinity of the surrounding margin of woodland, which resembles the shore of a lake, indented with deep vistas, like bays and inlets, and throwing out long points, like capes and headlands; while occasionally these points approach so close on either hand, that the traveller passes through a narrow avenue, or strait, where the shadows of the woodland fall upon his path, and then again emerges into another prairie. Where the plain is large, the forest outline is seen in the far perspective, like the

dim shore when beheld at a distance from the ocean. The eye sometimes roves over the green meadow without discovering a tree, a shrub, or any other object in the immense expanse but the wilderness of grass and flowers; while, at another time, the prospect is enlivened by the groves, which are seen interspersed like islands, or the solitary tree, which stands alone in the blooming desert.

"If it be in the spring of the year, and the young grass has just covered the ground with a carpet of delicate green—and, especially, if the sun is rising from behind a distant swell of the plain, and glittering upon the dew-drops, no scene can be more lovely to the eye.* * * * When the eye roves off from the green plain to the groves or points of timber, these are also found to be, in this season, robed in the most attractive hues. The rich undergrowth is in full bloom. The red-bud, the dog-wood, the crab-apple, the wild plum, the cherry, the wild rose, are abundant in all the rich lands; and the grape-vine, though its blossom is unseen, fills the air with fragrance. The variety of the wild fruit and flowering shrubs is so great, and such the profusion of the blossoms with which they are bowed down, that the eye is regaled almost to satiety.

he gaiety of the prairie, its embellishments, and the absence of the gloom and savage wildness of the forest, all contribute to dispel the feeling of lonesomeness which usually creeps over the mind of the solitary traveller in the wilderness. Though he may not see a house, nor a human being, and is conscious that he is far from the habitation of man, he can scarcely divest himself of the idea that he is

travelling through scenes embellished by the hand of art. The flowers, so fragile, so delicate, and so ornamental, seem to have been tastefully disposed to adorn the scene. The groves and clumps of trees appear to have been scattered over the lawn to beautify the landscape, and it is not easy to avoid that illusion of the fancy which persuades the beholder that such scenery has been created to gratify the refined taste of civilised man. Europeans are often reminded of the resemblance of this scene to that of the extensive parks of noblemen, which they have been accustomed to admire in the old world; the lawn, the avenue, the grove, the copse, which are there produced by art, are here produced by nature,—a splendid specimen of massy architecture, and the distant view of villages, are alone wanting to render the similitude complete.

"In the summer the prairie is covered with long coarse grass, which soon assumes a golden hue, and waves in the wind like a ripe harvest. In the low, wet prairies, where the substratum of clay lies near the surface, the centre or main stem of this grass, which bears the seed, acquires great thickness, and shoots up to the height of eight or nine feet, throwing out a few long, coarse leaves or blades, and the traveller often finds it higher than his head, as he rides through it on horseback. The plants, although numerous, and standing close together, appear to grow singly and unconnected, the whole force of the vegetative power expanding itself upward. But, in the rich undulating prairies, the grass is finer, with less of stalk, and a greater profusion of leaves. The roots spread and interweave, so as to form a

compact, even sod, and the blades expand into a close, thick sward, which is seldom more than eighteen inches high, and often less, until late in the season, when the seed-bearing stem grows up.

"The first coat of grass is mingled with small flowers, the violet, the bloom of the strawberry, and others of the most minute and delicate texture. As the grass increases in size, these disappear, and others, taller, and more gaudy, display their brilliant colours upon the green surface; and still later, a larger and coarser succession rises with the rising tide of verdure. The whole of the surface of these beautiful plains is clad, throughout the season of verdure, with every imaginable variety of colour, from grave to gay. It is impossible to conceive a greater diversity, or a richer profusion of hues, or to detect any predominating tint, except the green, which forms the beautiful ground, and relieves the exquisite brilliancy of all the others. The only changes of colour observed at the different seasons arise from the circumstance that, in the spring, the flowers are small, and the colours delicate; as the heat becomes more ardent, a hardier race appears, the flowers attain a greater size, and the hue deepens; and still later, a succession of coarser plants rise above the tall grass, throwing out larger and gaudier flowers. As the season advances from spring to midsummer, the individual flower becomes less beautiful, when closely inspected, but the landscape is far more variegated, rich, and glowing."

The preceding description is particularly applicable to the prairies of Illinois, which, both in salu-

brity and beauty, are inferior to the rolling lands of Texas.

" The whole of these prairies " (I quote from the published travels of Lewis and Clarke), " are represented to be composed of the richest and most fertile soil. The most luxuriant and succulent herbage covers the surface of the earth, interspersed with millions of flowers and flowering shrubs of the most ornamental character. Those who have viewed only a skirt of these prairies speak of them with enthusiasm, as if it were only there that nature was to be found truly perfect. They declare that the fertility of the rising grounds, the extreme richness of the vales, the coolness and excellent quality of the water found in every valley, the salubrity of the atmosphere, and, above all, the grandeur of the enchanting landscape which the country presents, inspire the soul with sensations not to be felt in any other region of the globe. Such is the description of the better known country lying to the south of the Red River, from Nacogdoches to San Antonio, in the province of Texas."

The appearance of a Texan prairie in spring, is thus depicted by Mrs. Holley: — " It is impossible to imagine the beauty of a Texas prairie when, in the vernal season, its rich luxuriant herbage, adorned with its thousand flowers, of every size and hue, seems to realize the vision of a terrestrial paradise. None but those who have seen can form an idea of its surpassing loveliness, and pen and pencil alike would fail in its delineation. The delicate, the gay, and the gaudy are intermingled with delightful con-

fusion, and those fanciful bouquets of fairy Nature borrow ten-fold charms from the smooth carpet of modest green which mantles around them. To say that admiration was excited in such a scene, would be but a faint transcript of the feelings. One feels that Omnipotence has consecrated here, in the bosom of nature and under heaven's wide canopy, a temple to receive the praise and adoration of the grateful beholder; and wild and reckless must be the soul from whose sensibilities no responsive homage could be elicited by such an exhibition of the power and beneficence of the Creator."

The colours are glowing, but, according to my own impressions, I cannot say that the picture is overwrought. Fair indeed, serenely fair, as a Madonna's aspect—and tranquillising and hope-inspiring to the care-stricken and heart-wearied home-seeker, are those Gardens of the Desert:

> "Those boundless unshorn fields, where lingers yet
> The beauty of the earth ere man had sinned—
> The Prairies!"

CHAPTER V.

Geological features of Texas—Gold and Silver of the North-western Highlands—Iron-ore, Alum, Copper, Lead, Steatite, and White Sulphuret of Iron—Mass of Metal at the Sources of the Brazos, supposed to be Meteoric Iron—Discovery of Zinc and Iron Pyrites—Peculiar Species of Stone—Abundance of Coal and Materials for Brick-making—Pumice Stone and Asphaltum at Galveston Island—Bituminous Bed on the San Bernard—Salt Lakes and Mineral Springs—Marine Fossil Remains and Siliceous Petrifactions—Petrified Forest near the Sources of the Pasigono—Diluvial and Artificial Mounds—Wild Animals—Game—Sporting of the West—Water-fowl and Land-birds—Fish, Reptiles, Insects.

SECONDARY and alluvial formations are the great geological characteristics of Texas. The Brazos Valley and the whole of the lower region of the Republic is one vast alluvion with a surface of black friable mould, formed by the decomposition of vegetable matter, and containing an admixture of fine silicious sand. Here, stones or gravel beds, are rarely seen, and the banks of the rivers are of the same rich soil as the lands they border. Masses of oyster shells and other marine deposits imbedded in the earth, confirm the prevailing belief that these smiling tracts, at no very remote epoch, acknowledged the dominion of the sea. Mounds are not unfrequent, the composition of which has strengthened this conclusion; and one remarkable for its elevation above the prairie may be described as illustrative of all. In the district of the Brazos, about twelve miles above Columbia, is a singular

swelling, or rather a series of undulations, above one hundred feet high and above a mile in circumference, forming a long regularly oval knoll, which attracts the notice of every traveller, it being the only eminence that breaks the uniform level of the surrounding tract for thirty or forty miles on either side. Of this mound, disintegrated limestone, gypsum, oyster, and other shells, comprising a great variety of marine exuviæ, are the constituent parts.

Advancing from the coast to the interior, the more recent deposits give way to beds of slate, shale, and sandstone, which are succeeded by those of the argillaceous oxide of iron and bituminous coal: still farther to the west, the appearance of transition, slates, and limestone, with trilobite enclosed, indicates the approach to the regions of mineral wealth and vegetable sterility; beyond these arise the Rocky Mountains, the "back-bone of the North American continent," which, regarded by the Red Men with superstitious awe, is called by them the "Crest of the World!"

The granitic chain of the Rocky Mountains does not present a range of uniform elevation, but rather groups, and, occasionally, detached peaks. Though some of these rise to the region of perpetual snow, their height, from their immediate base, is not so great as might be imagined, as they swell up from elevated plains several thousand feet above the level of the ocean. These plains are often of a desolate sterility—mere sandy wastes, destitute of trees and herbage, scorched by the ardent and reflected rays of the summer sun, and swept in winter by chilling blasts from the snow-clad mountains. Such is a

great part of that vast region extending north and south along the mountains, several hundred miles in width, which, resembling the arid steppes of Tartary, has been appropriately termed the Great American Desert. Between the insulated peaks and groups are deep valleys, with small streams winding through them, which find their way to the lower plains, augmenting as they proceed, and ultimately discharging themselves into those great rivers which, draining the continent, traverse the prairies, like huge arteries. The soil of these vallies is generally blackish, though sometimes yellow. It is frequently mixed with marl, and with marine substances in a state of decomposition. It is through these fertile intervals that population must ultimately extend its ramifications westward to the Pacific.

There are many extensive beds of blue limestone in North-western Texas; there are also detached boulders of granitic rock, and, it is said, quarries of excellent marble: clay and sand, suitable for brick-making, are found between this section and the line of the lower Brazos. Some specimens of gold and silver have been brought from the neighbourhood of the San Saba hills, and the mountainous region about one hundred and fifty miles north-east of Bexar. The particles of gold, which were small and pure, were lodged in veins disseminated in fragments of reddish quartz. According to a tradition noticed by Almonte, a silver mine was, in former times, beneficially wrought near the mouth of the San Saba river; but the Comanche Indians having destroyed the works and the fort erected for their protection, the mine was abandoned. Although

an association for the purpose has been formed, the jealousy with which the roving Indians regard the intrusion of white men upon their hunting grounds has hitherto retarded the progress of the Anglo-American settlers in Texas in systematic geological researches over the interesting region of the north-western highlands.

Iron ore is distributed in profusion throughout Texas, being found almost everywhere except in the level region of the coast. Sulphate of iron, alum, copper, and lead, have been discovered in considerable quantities. Specimens of steatite, of which there are extensive beds, and white sulphuret of iron, have been obtained on the banks of the Rio Frio. At the sources of the Brazos there is a large mass of bright and malleable metal, slightly oxidated, several tons weight, of which a portion was conveyed to New York, some years back, under the impression of its being platinum. Experiments, it is stated, proved it to be pure native, or meteoric, iron; a very rare species of ore, the existence of which was long disputed by mineralogists, but which has been found not only in volcanic formations, but in veins properly so called; zinc and iron pyrites are occasionally discovered. Valuable lime-stone, gypsum, and mill-stone grit, are found in various sections of the country, and, on the upper forks of the Trinity lead has been found as pure and as accessible as at the celebrated mines of Missouri. A species of stone, in the vicinity of San Antonio de Bexar, affords a most convenient and durable building material. When first taken from the quarry, it is quite soft, and may be worked with the greatest facility; but by

exposure to the atmosphere, it soon becomes indurated, so as to resist a strong application of mechanical force. When this stone is intended for use, it should be kept under water until immediately required.

In addition to iron, the utilitarian sovereign of metals, Texas possesses coal—the grand auxiliary of the arts, which tend to enrich and civilise the world. Coal, both anthracite and bituminous, abounds from the Trinity River to the Rio Grande. The coal on the latter river has been represented, by the agents of the "Texas and New Ireland Land Company," an association broken up by the revolution in 1836, as of a generous and bituminous quality, almost, if not quite, equal to "Liverpool." The same parties have stated that iron ore and a fine-grained granite are abundant on the Rio Grande, together with clay and sand for brick-making.

Small masses of pumice-stone, and a kind of asphaltum, have been found on the shores of Galveston Island, thrown up, probably, by the waves. In the northern part of the island, ten or twelve feet below the surface, there are extensive ledges of disintegrated limestone and numerous beds of clay. In common with almost all countries that contain salt mines or lakes, Texas has bituminous beds. Almonte mentions one, on the River San Bernard, about fifteen miles from San Felipe, by the road which leads from that town to Gonzales. It lies, he says, precisely in the middle of the stream, where he bathed at half-past six in the afternoon of the month of August, 1834, and found the water so warm that he could not bear it for a minute. A

great quantity of pitch, he conceives, might be extracted by changing the current of the river—an undertaking of no great difficulty, as the stream at the spot is shallow, and not more than twelve or fourteen feet across.

Salt is abundant from the Sabine to the Rio Grande. In addition to the great salt lake, about thirty miles east of the Rio Grande, and the saline lake of the Brazos, there are others of less importance, with numerous saline springs, and even some streams, as the Sal Colorado. The manufacture of salt for the Mexican market might prove very lucrative. The value of salt in stock-raising is well known to every grazier. Conjoined to the extraordinary dryness of the climate and the fineness of the pasturage, it will render the rearing of sheep a certain source of profit in the north-western high lands. Nitrate of potash abounds in the district of Nacogdoches. Near the mouth of the Navasoto is a spring which affords a large stream of water highly impregnated with sulphur. A similar one rises near the city of Austin, and another long noted for its medicinal virtues, about thirty miles from San Antonio, on the western bank of the Cibolo. Besides these, there are springs of a chalybeate character.

Marine fossil remains, and silicious petrifactions are found in different parts of the country. In the middle and northern sections of the district lying between the Trinity and Neches rivers, great numbers of petrified post oak lie imbedded in the soil, some in a horizontal position, but the larger portion nearly upright, with an inclination towards

the north. They are extremely hard, giving fire to steel; generally of a light grey or reddish-brown colour, and present distinctly the form of the trunk of the post oak, even to the knots. "Near the head of the Pasigono River," according to a late Topographical Description of Texas, "is the celebrated petrified forest, which has attracted so much attention from naturalists. Here is a forest of several hundred acres of trees *standing*, which are turned to stone. This is a plain contradiction to the theory which has heretofore existed on the subject of petrifaction. The doctrine of submergation being required to produce petrifaction, is entirely disproved. Petrifactions which exist in many parts of this country show evident marks of recent formation. Trees which are growing are sometimes partially changed to stone." Minute examination will, I apprehend, deprive this stone forest of much of its marvellous pretensions, which are doubtless owing to silicious springs, or the rapid formation of incrusting concretionary limestone, which readily moulds itself to the shape of a foreign body. The deposits from calcareous springs form equally on vegetable substances—on stones, metals, wood, or lead, and probably incrusted the petrified waggon wheels previously mentioned on the authority of Mr. Bonnell. Great quantities of petrified bones, of an immense size, have been found in the bed of the Brazos. From this collection a gentleman of San Felipe procured several teeth of an enormous size; one of them, with a small portion of the jaw attached to it, weighed above fifty pounds. A fossil horn was

found above San Felipe, measuring eight feet in length, and about three feet in the thickest part of the circumference. Nearly the entire skeleton of some huge unknown animal has been found just below Bastrop, on the bank of the Colorado. The bones, which are larger than any of those dug up in the Mississippi valley, are different from those of the Mastodon. The animal had been furnished with horns, six feet and a half in length, and nine inches in diameter. Part of a tooth was found, which weighed above sixteen pounds. Bivalves and other shells have been taken from the limestone in the neighbourhood of the city of Austin.

Besides mounds of apparently diluvial formation, there are others which, like those of Illinois and Missouri, have evidently been constructed by the hands of men, and by a race which probably preceded the Red Indian. The most remarkable of these is a circular erection on a plain near the Neches, in the district of Nacogdoches. The diameter of its base is about fifty yards, and it ascends, with a steep acclivity, to an elevation of some fifty feet. The surface near the base is smooth, and the earth which forms the mound was evidently conveyed several hundred yards from the edge of an abrupt declivity, from which a great quantity of clay seems to have been scooped. History contains no record of the people by whom these mounds were raised, or the purposes for which they were intended.

All the wild animals common to the Western States, and some peculiar to Mexico, are found in Texas. The bison, or buffalo, which deserted the

prairies of the western country, as population encroached upon its range of pasturage, and which, owing to the same cause, has retreated from many of its accustomed haunts in Texas, is still to be met with in the mountainous district between the Guadalupe and the Rio Grande. The scent of the buffalo is so acute that it can only be approached from the leeward side: it is timid until wounded, when it becomes wildly impetuous, and repeats its attacks until it falls. Being both active and powerful, the charge of an old bull is very formidable. The horns, thick at the base, short and sharp-pointed, are hard and black, and highly prized for cups and other purposes. The buffalo, when young, may be domesticated without much difficulty. Its flesh, when the animal is in good condition, is excellent, and the hump, the taste of which has been compared to marrow, is considered a delicacy by the hunters. Buffalo hides are covered with an exceedingly thick hair, approaching to the character of wool, and bring good prices in Canada and the Northern States, where they are used as wrappers in winter travelling, especially in the sledges or sleighs. They are also valuable in Spanish America, where they are used as a sort of bed or carpet. Buffaloes are seldom seen near the sea coast, but descend in large herds from Arkansas, Missouri, and the uninhabited tract between the head waters of the Red River and Santa Fé. Their flesh supplies the principal sustenance of the Comanches and other Indian tribes. In a late campaign against the Cherokees and Comanches, General Burleson, the commander of the Texan troops, scoured the

Indian country for a considerable distance, and on his return drove before his army all the large herds of buffaloes in that direction, until not much less than 25,000 head were found feeding within the settlements of Texas. When upon this service, General Burleson traversed a large extent of country, from the borders of the Trinity on the east, to the neighbourhood of the branches of the Rio Grande, on the west.

The buffalo is migratory, and during the summer journeys towards the north, over the plains that lie between the head waters of the Red River, the Arkansas, the Missouri, and the Rio Grande. In the winter the snow compels the herds to turn, in search of pasturage, towards the mild regions of the south. Captain Bonneville, in his Adventures beyond the Rocky Mountains, gives the following picturesque description of the migrations of this animal:—

"They now came to a region abounding in buffalo—that ever-journeying animal, which moves in countless droves from point to point of the vast wilderness; traversing plains, pouring through the intricate defiles of mountains, swimming rivers—ever on the move: guided in its boundless migrations by some traditionary knowledge, like the finny tribes of the ocean, which, at their certain seasons, find their mysterious paths across the deep, and revisit the remotest shores.

"These great migratory herds of the buffalo have their hereditary paths and byways, worn deep through the country, and making for the surest passes of the mountains, and the most practicable fords of rivers.

When once a great column is in full career, it goes straightforward, regardless of obstacles, those in front being impelled by the moving mass behind. At such times they will break through a camp, trampling down every thing in their course.

"It was the lot of the voyagers, one night, to encamp at one of these buffalo landing-places, and exactly in the trail. They had not been long asleep when they were awakened by a great bellowing and trampling, and the rush, and splash, and snorting of animals in the river. * * * * It was a singular spectacle, by the uncertain moonlight, to behold this countless throng making their way across the river, blowing, and bellowing, and splashing. Sometimes they pass in such dense and continuous column as to form a temporary dam across the river, the waters of which rise and rush over their backs or between their squadrons. The roaring and rushing sounds of one of these vast herds crossing a river may sometimes, on a still night, be heard for many miles."

Wild horses, or *mustangs*, as they are called by the Mexicans, are numerous in the northern prairies and the western sections of Texas, where they keep a-head of population. They are seldom large or heavy, but show blood, are well proportioned, hardy, active, and docile, if caught young. They are generally about thirteen hands high, and of all colours, though piebald, light brown, chestnut, and dun prevail. The hoofs of the Texan mustangs are tender, as compared with those of the horses of central Mexico, in consequence of the softness of the ground on which they are reared. They are better adapted

to the saddle than to harness. These animals are the descendants of Barbary horses introduced into the New World by the Spaniards, and set at large on the abundant pastures, where they have multiplied amazingly. They are ridden, hunted, and, in times of scarcity, eaten by the wild Indians of the Mexican frontier. There are two modes of catching them—by noosing them with a cord made of twisted strips of raw hide, attached to a long pole, and called the *lazo*, and by surrounding and driving them into pens prepared for their reception. The hunters who use the lazo, when a drove appears, station themselves, well mounted, around it, and commence the chase. As soon as the lazo is thrown over the head of a horse, it is drawn tight, almost to suffocation, and being hauled out at right angles with the rider's course, the animal is thrown to the ground, bereft of motion, and sometimes of life. He is raised and mounted by a rider with heavy spurs and powerful bits, flogged, and run at full speed, until exhaustion is complete. Broken by the repetition of this cruel process, he ever after dreads the lazo; and, however refractory, can be immediately subdued by its use, and often by its mere display. The other and better mode of catching wild horses is by constructing a wooden fence in the shape of a harrow, with a strong pen at its lesser end, and driving or decoying the animals into it. They are sold at various prices: those caught with the lazo are worth only a few dollars in the home market: if taken young in the pens they are easily domesticated, and occasionally bring large prices in the markets of the United States. The presence of the wild horse is itself a

proof of the natural luxuriance of the soil and the mildness of the climate.

Asses and mules are frequently found mingled with the wild horses. The latter obtain a ready sale in Louisiana and Florida; and as large numbers can be reared on the natural pastures for a trifle, they will form a source of considerable profit to the grazier. It is a practice of the Mexican breeders to cut off one of the ligaments of the fore legs, to restrain the brood mares from eloping with the wild herds, a practice by which an Anglo-American population will, I trust, never be disgraced.

The appearance of the wild horse in his Texan pastures has been graphically sketched by an eyewitness:—

"We rode through beds of sun-flowers, miles in extent, their dark seedy centres and radiating yellow leaves following the sun through the day from east to west, and drooping when the shadows fell over them. These were sometimes beautifully varied with a delicate flower, of an azure tint, yielding no perfume, but forming a pleasant contrast to the bright yellow of the sun-flower.

"About half-past ten we discerned a creature in motion at an immense distance, and instantly started in pursuit. Fifteen minutes' riding brought us near enough to discover, by its fleetness, that it could not be a buffalo, yet it was too large for an antelope or deer. On we went, and soon distinguished the erect head, the flowing mane, and the beautiful proportions of the wild horse of the prairie. He saw us, and sped away with an arrowy fleetness till he gained a distant eminence, when he turned to

gaze at us, and suffered us to approach within four hundred yards, when he bounded away again in another direction, with a graceful velocity delightful to behold. We paused—for, to pursue him with a view to capture was clearly out of the question. When he discovered we were not following him, he also paused, and now seemed to be inspired with curiosity equal to our own, for, after making a slight turn, he came nearer, until we could distinguish the inquiring expression of his clear, bright eye, and the quick curl of his inflated nostrils.

"We had no hopes of catching, and did not wish to kill him, but our curiosity led us to approach him slowly. We had not advanced far before he moved away, and, circling round, approached on the other side. It was a beautiful animal—a sorrel, with jet black mane and tail. As he moved, we could see the muscles quiver in his glossy limbs; and when, half playfully, and half in fright, he tossed his flowing mane in the air, and flourished his long silky tail, our admiration knew no bounds, and we longed—hopelessly, vexatiously longed—to possess him. We might have shot him where we stood; but, had we been starving, we could scarcely have done it. He was free, and we loved him for the very possession of that liberty we longed to take from him; but we would not kill him. We fired a rifle over his head: he heard the shot, and the whiz of the ball, and away he went, disappearing in the next hollow, showing himself again as he crossed the distant ridges, still seeming smaller, until he faded away to a speck on the far horizon's verge."

Deer are abundant in every part of Texas, whether settled or waste; but they seem to prefer the level region of the coast. They are constantly crossing the traveller's path, or are seen grazing in flocks on the flowery prairies, heightening the resemblance of those wooded meadows to the parks of the British aristocracy. In some parts of the country the settler may calculate on killing a deer with as much certainty as an English farmer can count upon taking a sheep from his own flock. The flesh of the deer is good, and the skin valuable, both for export and domestic use. The hams, when properly cured, are an excellent article of food. Many of the woodsmen dress the skins, and make them into pantaloons and hunting-shirts,—garments of great utility in piercing through the tangled and thorny undergrowth of wild districts.

There are several modes of Western deer-hunting, and all equally primitive. Sometimes the hunters resort to a favourite haunt of the game, such as the neighbourhood of a "salt-lick;" and while a part beat up their retreat with the dogs, others remain in ambush near their usual crossing-places at the streams and swamps, and shoot the deer as they pass. In the night they are decoyed and killed by a mode familiar to the Western hunters, and called "shining the eyes." A hunter fixes a blazing torch in his hat, or employs a person to carry one immediately in his front. The deer stands gazing at the light, and the hunter calculates his distance and takes his aim, guided by the brilliancy of the animal's eyes and the space between them, being especially careful that the shadow of a tree or any other

object does not fall upon the game. Experienced woodsmen say that, in the season when the pastures are green, the deer invariably quits its lair at the rising of the moon. Keeping this hour in view, the hunter rides through the forest, with his rifle on his shoulder, directing a keen glance towards the adjacent shades. The moment the deer is in sight, he slides from his horse, advances under cover of the largest trees, until he gets within rifle range, when he fires, and rarely fails in bringing down the quarry. In the cloudless nights of summer, when the moon is abroad in the splendour of the southern latitudes, it is a most exhilarating pastime to lie in ambush near the resort of the deer, ensconced behind an artificial screen of green boughs, or perched among the thick branches of a spreading tree.

The moose and the elk have fled before civilisation to the solitudes of the western frontier, but civilization, by destroying or driving off the wolves, is favourable to the increase of deer, whose most inveterate enemies are the beasts of prey which devour their young.

Bears are frequently encountered at a distance from the settlements, and are hunted for the oil and skin. The flesh of the American black bear, the only kind known in Texas, is cured for food, and the hams are considered particularly good. There are some of the feline tribes in Texas, such as the Mexican cougar and panther, which commit depredations on the stock of the solitary settler, but are not formidable to man. The Mexican wild hog (peccari) is occasionally seen among the mountains. Wolves and foxes are troublesome on the outskirts

of remote settlements, and there are sufficient numbers of raccoons, opossums, hares, rabbits, and such "small deer," to afford the hunter constant sport in the woodlands.

In the list of amphibious animals are the otter and beaver, which formerly abounded in the district of Nacogdoches, but have been greatly thinned by the hunters and trappers. Packs of large and powerful dogs are kept by most of the planters for the purpose of destroying wolves and other four-footed prowlers destructive of stock. The beasts of prey are destined soon to disappear before the husbandman's axe and the hunter's rifle.

In the department of ornithology, most of the specimens known to the United States are common to Texas. Of land birds of prey, there are the bald eagle, the Mexican eagle, the vulture, buzzard, and several varieties of hawks and owls. The aquatic birds of prey are varied and numerous, including different species of cranes—one (*bec rouge*) with a beautiful red crest—the pelican, cormorant, swan, heron, kingfisher, water-turkey, gull, &c. No waters on the globe are the resort of a greater number and variety of fowl than those on the coast of the Mexican gulf. Immense flocks of wild geese, brant, snipe, teal, curlew, canvass-back and summer-ducks, and other aquatic varieties, frequent the rivers and sea-shore, offering an easy and inexhaustible prey to the sportsman, who will also find on land good store of partridges, pheasants, prairie-hens, quails, turtle-doves, pigeons, plover, snipes, ortolans, and other birds suited to the table. There are, besides, the raven, the prairie-hawk, the

fish-hawk, the crow, the magpie, red-winged blackbirds, starlings, the blue jay, the lark, different species of the woodpecker, swallows, and martins, the gay, clamorous, and pilfering paroquet, the brilliant and delicate humming-bird, with, among the songsters of the grove, the mocking-bird, the oriole, the thrush, and the whip-poor-will. Birds of song seldom enliven the deep solitudes of the forests; it is an observation in the Western States, that they rapidly follow the march of population. Domestic fowls are very prolific, and lay their eggs throughout the whole winter. A single hen will rear a hundred chickens in the year, and chickens hatched in the spring have produced broods of their own in autumn.

The streams, rivers, and bays of Texas, abound in fish, not a few of which are of excellent quality. To many kinds the settlers have given English names, although differing widely from those whose appellations have been bestowed upon them. The red-fish of Galveston Bay weighs from five to fifty pounds, and is so plentiful that its name has been given to the sand-bar which intersects the bay. The sailors of the Columbia, the steamer in which I sailed to Galveston from New Orleans, caught a number of this fish with the sieve, and it made a very agreeable addition to the dinner-table. Yellow, white, and blue catfish are common in the small streams and rivers, and are palatable food. There are likewise (so called by the inhabitants) perch, buffalo, eels, sheep's-head, mullet, pike, trout, flounder, sucker, and other edible fish familiar to the

American waters. The gar, a worthless fish, shaped like a pike, but longer, rounder, and swifter, frequents the Red River. The alligator gar attains a great size, is armed with almost impenetrable scales, and, from its strength and voracity, may be termed the river-shark. Of the crustaceous tribes, the crab, cray-fish, and a large kind of shrimp, are the principal sorts. Oysters, clams, and muscles, are the most prominent of the testaceous varieties. Beds of well-flavoured oysters line great part of the coast, and nearly all the adjacent inlets.

In the class of reptiles,* the only valuable species is the tortoise. Both the hard and soft shelled turtle are numerous in the bays and mouths of the rivers. The soft-shelled mud tortoise is said to be not much inferior to the West India sea-turtle, as an article of epicurean indulgence. Lizards and chameleons are common, and there are scorpions which, with a large and ugly kind of spider named tarantula inflicting a sting resembling that of a bee, bear an indifferent reputation. The largest and most formidable animal of the reptile class is the alligator, which infests the large rivers, especially Red River and its bayous. These creatures are, however, rather objects of terror from their bulk, strength, and hideous aspect, than from their actual aggressions. They are dangerous to pigs, calves, and other domestic animals of like size, but they are easily avoided even by children, in consequence of their inability to move in a lateral direction. On land they are sluggish and harmless, neither going out of their way to attack,

nor to avoid man. The largest alligators measure about sixteen feet in length; the skin is valuable for the tanner.

Few new countries have been less troubled with serpents than Texas, yet it has some of a venomous character, but for whose attacks remedies may easily be provided. The rattle-snake, which grows to a large size, is not apt to assail man unless it be trampled upon, or otherwise provoked, and it almost invariably gives timely warning of hostilities by shaking the rattles with which it is furnished. The large rattle-snake is seldom seen far out in the prairie; the mocassin snake is confined to wet, or marshy land; the prairie snake is a small reptile about a foot in length, and of a drab colour. Besides these, the copper-head snake is the only venomous serpent to be found in Texas, and though the list may appear to Europeans much too long, Americans do not regard it as forming any serious objection to settling in the country. The Indians, it is said, when bitten by the rattle-snake, kill the reptile (taking care that it does not bite itself) and apply the fleshy part of the tail to the wound, until (as is supposed) the poison having a greater affinity for the flesh of the serpent than for that of the man, is thereby extracted. A root called snakes'-master, which grows abundantly in the pine-woods, is said to be an efficient remedy for the reptile's venom. It is a received opinion in the Western States, that the external and internal application of volatile alkali will neutralise the poison and effect a certain cure. The following remedy has been recommended by a

physician who had witnessed its beneficial effects: —To the freshly bitten surface he applied a bright coal, on the end of a burning hickory stick, and kept it there long enough to raise a deep blister. This was performed about sunset upon a soldier's leg, and the next day the man marched and did his duty as usual. Among the harmless serpents is the glass snake, of a lustrous brilliancy, which, if struck on the back, will break into a number of pieces like glass. Snakes of every description are easily disabled by a stroke on the back; a smart blow with a rod, or a riding whip, being sufficient to destroy their locomotive power.

The deer of the West seems to have an instinctive animosity to the rattle-snake, retiring back and then rushing forward and stamping it to death with its hoofs, whenever it crosses its path. But, where the population has become dense, the most destructive foes to this hated reptile are the swine, which kill and devour them greedily. With the rapid increase of the "unclean beast," the rattle-snake in Texas will speedily disappear. Great numbers of them are destroyed annually in the periodical burnings of the prairie grass.

The low lands of Texas are of course prolific in frogs and toads. A singular little animal of the lizard tribe, termed in popular phraseology the "horned frog," inhabits the prairies, and is an object of some curiosity. It is harmless and agile, coloured and shaped like a frog, with the difference that it exhibits a tail and does not leap in running. Its "horns" are small projections rising about a quarter

of an inch from the front of the head. A sailor at Galveston, who had caged a few of these animals in the crown of his hat, valued his collection at ten dollars a-piece, and, as an encouragement to purchase, assured me that I might convey the prize alive and well to Europe without any farther trouble than supplying them with air.

Nature has been prodigal of insect life, especially in the low and thickly-wooded region, where the inhabitants, during the heat of summer, are so annoyed by musquitos, and their indefatigable allies, as to repine bitterly at the profusion of these minute but malignant tormentors. In riding through this region during the months of July, August, or September, both man and horse suffer severely. Calomel is applied to allay the sufferings of the horses and cattle, and persecuted humanity will derive relief from an application of spirits and water to the venomous punctures of the musquito and sand-fly, —a remedy first recommended to me by a hospitable old lady, of goodly proportions and French descent, residing at Rivière du Loup, in Lower Canada.—May her shadow never be less!

Owing to its exemption from troublesome insects, in addition to its superior salubrity and other considerations of moment, I would recommend the rolling and hilly country of the Upper Brazos, Colorado, and Guadalupe, to the European settler, in preference to the level section of the coast—the paradise of the cotton planter.

The cantharides or Spanish flies, used for blistering, are common, besides bees, beetles, grass-

hoppers, butterflies, ants, wasps, fireflies, with many kindred and dissimilar species, calculated to reward the researches and enrich the collections of the entomologist. The farther we advance along the level and undulating country towards the Rio Grande, the more closely do we find the productions, animal and vegetable, of Texas, approach in character to those of intertropical Mexico.

CHAPTER VI.

Suitable Locations for Agricultural Emigrants — Facilities for raising every kind of Stock—Division of the Republic into Counties—Character of their Soil and nature of their Products—Jefferson—Jasper—Sabine—San Augustine—Shelby—Harrison — Red River — Fannin — Nacogdoches — Houston — Liberty—Galveston—Harrisburg—Montgomery—Robertson—Milam — Brazoria — Austin — Fort Bend — Washington — Matagorda — Colorado — Fayette—Bastrop — Travis — Jackson —Victoria—Gonzalez—Refugio—Goliad—Bexar—San Patricio —Original Field Notes and Journal of a Survey, for the New Arkansas and Texas Land Company — Superiority of Prairie over Forest Land for the purposes of Settlers, especially European emigrants.

In describing the three great natural divisions of the soil of Texas, the emigrant has been furnished with a general guide to direct him in pitching his tent, or erecting his log-house, in conformity with his previous habits and ultimate views. If the native of a southern clime, devoted to tropical agriculture and anxious to obtain quick and large returns from capital, he will find a suitable field of operation on the alluvial lands of the coast, or the rich "bottoms" of the Red River. If accustomed to a more temperate clime, and the mixed pursuit of farming and stock-raising, he will be quite at home on the rolling prairies. If transplanted from the keen and vigorous north, from a land where the aid of manufacturing industry has been called in to assist the endeavours of the grower of wheat and the breeder of sheep and cattle, his proper resting-

place will be in the bracing neighbourhood of the north-western high lands, where tender pasturage awaits the importation of the Merino, and streams, rapid and perennial, invite the erection of mills and the introduction of machinery.

Cattle and swine, and indeed horses and mules, may be reared everywhere, with an absence of trouble and expense almost incredible. So favourable is the climate and so abundant the provision which Nature has made, that little attention is requisite beyond such precautions as may be necessary to prevent them from straying away or becoming wild. For horses and cattle the prairie grasses and the cane-brakes offer a never failing supply of provender, and the "mast" of the woods, with the native ground pea and various nutritious roots, will long afford unbought subsistence to hogs. Even salt is ready at hand for the preservation of animal health.

Live stock may be introduced from the United States, purchased in the country, or procured cheap from the Mexicans on the Rio Grande. The increase is more rapid than in colder climes, the produce is earlier, and, allowing for all casualties, stock generally will double their numbers every two years, without any exaction of care or cost. It is not unusual for the first calf to be brought forth when the mother is but fourteen or fifteen months old. Domestic animals fatten very fast, and the beef and pork are of first-rate quality. The increase obtained by a Texan farmer from two pigs amounted to forty in ten months, and this is a fair example of the multiplication of stock. To prepare hogs for market, they should be taken from the woods in autumn,

when fattened by the wild nuts, or mast, and fed for a few weeks on Indian corn, which imparts solidity to the flesh and whiteness and firmness to the lard. Without this preparatory feeding the flesh will be soft and oily, and hard to keep, though not deficient in flavour for present use.

There will always be a large consumption of beef and pork, together with butter, milk, lard, and poultry, in the towns, and among the lowland planters, who restrict themselves chiefly to the cultivation of cotton and sugar. A ready market offers, also, in Louisiana, besides the demand that will arise in Mexico, Cuba, and the West India Islands. All the Indian corn and other bread stuffs will, for a long period, be consumed in the country, and obtain a profitable sale there, owing to the great influx of emigrants. Settlers with small capital usually sell the oxen, which are serviceable for draught, and retain the cows, so that in a very few years they have, in stock alone, ample means of rustic independence.

It has been said, and not without reason, that it will cost more to raise a brood of chickens in Texas than an equal number of cattle. The one is feeble and dependent, and confined to the precincts of the house; its natural means of sustenance are soon exhausted, and it must be protected and provided with food. The others range abroad, are nourished and defended by their respective dams, feeding on the untilled and ungarnered harvests of nature, and are very soon competent to protect and support themselves.

Although horses thrive well on the natural pastures, they will, if worked hard, require some grain.

The district of the Lower Brazos is reputed to be unfavourable to the health of these animals, owing probably to the numbers of insects in the summer. The wool of the Mexican sheep is of an inferior quality, but this may be attributed to neglect in breeding and to the predominance of prickly shrubs in the plains where the flocks of the interior feed. The flesh of the sheep reared in the northern and western parts of Texas is tender and well flavoured, and the skill and industry of the Anglo-American farmer will soon effect an improvement in the fleece. Mr. Flower, an English agriculturist who settled, in 1817, on the prairie lands of Illinois, by the introduction of Merino and Saxony rams, produced, from the descendants of the country ewes, fleeces of as fine wool as those of the original imported stock. A few flocks of sheep have been introduced lately into Texas, and by their rapid increase, rich fleeces and delicate mutton, show that they will remunerate the owners. One flock which had been driven as far into the interior as Austin, appeared with their lambs in good condition in the month of January, many of them being fit for the butcher. Goats multiply rapidly, requiring no other attention than what is necessary to prevent them from becoming wild, and to protect them from the wolves in the distant settlements. The prairies are burnt over twice a year; in mid-summer and about the opening of winter. Immediately after the burning, the grass springs up, so that there is a nearly constant supply throughout the year. It is a common saying of the inhabitants, that, in the cold and stubborn North, man lives for the beast, but in Texas the beast lives

for man. A climate that almost renders house shelter unnecessary, and a soil that approaches to the character of an ever-abundant meadow, warrant the observation. Artificial grasses have been beneficially introduced in the prairies of the Western States, and there is no reason to fear that they would fail in Texas, where the most luxuriant *gramina* are indigenous. Live stock, with cotton and sugar, are destined to form the great staples of the country. Cattle, horses, and mules are driven from Eastern Texas over-land to Natchez, Natchitoches, and New Orleans, at a trifling cost, as grass is plentiful, and the drivers carry provisions, shoot game, and "camp out."

The most healthy and pleasant portions of Texas are in the region of Nacogdoches, the rolling country between the Brazos and the Colorado; southward and westward of the latter river—high up on the Brazos and its branches, to "Robertson's Colony," and in "Beale's Grant" near the Rio Grande. The new administrative divisions of the Republic keep pace with the progress of the settlements, and the extension of Counties being coincident with the spread of population, the boundaries of thirty-two were defined by law at the close of the Session of Congress in the spring of 1840. Commencing eastward from the Sabine on the Gulf of Mexico, I shall notice those characteristics of the several Counties that are calculated to interest the emigrant pausing upon the choice of a "location."

Jefferson County is an almost uniformly level plain, with a strip of timbered land at the north,

between ten and fifteen miles in breadth, extending across the county. The remainder of the surface is open prairie, a large proportion of which is wet. Towards the western boundary, near the Neches river, and in the middle section near the eastern boundary, the soil is excellent, consisting of a black sandy loam, resting upon a bed of yellow clay intermixed with sand. Elsewhere the soil is comparatively poor, and better adapted to grazing than tillage. The swampy tracts which disfigure this district are very well adapted to the cultivation of rice. Throughout the whole extent of the county the Neches is navigable.

The land upon the Sabine, for two hundred miles from its mouth, is generally of an inferior quality, with the exception of the "bottoms"* upon the river and its tributaries, which are sometimes rich and extensive. A lofty growth of valuable pine, with occasional breaks of prairie, usually crests the uplands. The bottoms are suited to the cultivation of Indian corn, cotton, and sugar, and the uplands afford good pasture. The lands on the tributary creeks are of a like description.

* The term "bottom" is used throughout the West to designate the alluvial soil on the margins of rivers, usually called "intervals" in the eastern States of the Union. Portions of this description of land are overflowed for a longer or shorter period, when the rivers are at their height. The surface of the alluvial bottoms is not entirely level. In some places it resembles alternate waves of the ocean, and looks as though the waters had left their deposit in ridges, and retired. The land which is capable of present cultivation and free from the lodgment of the waters, has a soil of inexhaustible fertility.

JASPER COUNTY is undulating at the south and hilly at the north, with one or two elevations at the north-west, dignified with the title of mountains, though only two or three hundred feet in height. It is a wooded region, destitute of prairies, and is one of the poorest counties of Texas. It contains, nevertheless, many extensive tracts of excellent land; one of these known as "Bevil's Settlement," about thirty miles from north to south, and twenty from east to west, is not surpassed by any land in the world. It is surrounded on every side by "pine barrens,"* and appears like a garden in the desert. It is covered by a lofty growth of magnolia, oak, ash, hickory and some pine, with a short undergrowth of cane. In the eastern part of the county the soil is generally good, consisting of a shallow layer of black mould resting upon a layer of reddish loam blended with sand. In the middle and western parts, at a distance from the streams, the soil is quite sandy. The valleys of the Neches and the Angelina (the only navigable rivers of the county) are subject

* Lands partaking of the character both of the forest and the prairie are termed "barrens," or "oak openings." The surface is generally dry, and less even than the prairies, and is covered with scattered oaks, interspersed, at times, with pine, hickory and other forest trees, mostly of stunted and dwarfish size, but springing from a rich vegetable soil, eminently adapted to agricultural uses. The turf is grassy, seldom encumbered with brushwood, but not unfrequently broken by jungles of gaudy flowering plants and dwarf sumach. Landscapes of surpassing beauty are found among the "barrens," and emigrants need not hesitate to settle on them, wherever wood barely sufficient for present use can be found, as these lands, after the burning of the grasses, produce timber with a degree of rapidity of which the inhabitants of the North can form no conception.

to overflows to the distance of from one to three miles on each side, and are very fertile—the layers of black mould being in many places from two to three feet deep, yielding excellent crops of maize, sugar, and cotton. The county is remarkably favoured with springs and numerous small streams of wholesome water.

SABINE COUNTY closely resembles the adjoining county of San Augustine. The whole surface is gently undulating, and generally supports a heavy growth of timber. Dogwood abounds in the western section, beach in the eastern, and pine in the middle, and there are also large quantities of hickory, ash, elm, and cotton-wood. There are two or three small prairies in the western part.

The western section is very fertile, being of like quality with the "Red Lands," so called from the colour of the soil, which is reddish brown or chocolate, caused by the presence of oxide of iron. The Red Lands extend from the Sabine, near Gaines Ferry, to the Trinity, near the crossing of the old San Antonio road, and up these rivers almost to their sources. They embrace a section of country more than a hundred miles square, and are admirably adapted to all the purposes of agriculture. The other parts of the county are generally light and sandy. There are, however, many productive and extensive tracts in the south-western division, near the Sabine and on the Palo Gacho Creek. The Sabine is navigable; the remaining streams, of which the Palo Gacho is the principal, are small, with wholesome and agreeable waters.

SAN AUGUSTINE COUNTY lies almost entirely within the elevated undulating region of Texas, and is nearly woodland throughout. Its soil, with few exceptions, appertains to the tract called the "Red Lands," and yields abundant returns of cotton, maize, rye, oats, potatoes, and most culinary vegetables. In the south-eastern part a few sandy ridges support a thin growth of pine. Dispersed throughout the county are some small prairies, the soil of which is uniformly a rich black mould.

The Ayish Bayou, which derives its name from an Indian tribe that formerly lived upon its banks, is the principal stream of the county of San Augustine. The bottoms on this river and on the Attoyac are extensive and fertile, and the uplands of good quality. These streams, supplied by the best springs, are never-failing, and afford valuable water power.

SHELBY COUNTY is diversified in aspect and soil, the southern portion being generally undulating, the northern and middle portions distinguished by hills of easy elevation. The western section comprehends a few small prairies, exclusive of which the county is woodland—dogwood, pine, hickory, ash, elm, and beech predominating in the southern part, pine in the northern and middle. The extensive hickory uplands of the north are of an excellent quality; in the middle are many poor, sandy ridges, thinly grown with pines: the southern division is crossed by alternate ridges of a soil resembling the Red Lands and a grey-coloured soil resting upon a bed of dark red clay, both remarkably rich and productive. The soil of the prairies and of the broad plain of Tanaha Creek consists of a deep black loam.

HARRISON COUNTY, in its general features, resembles Shelby county. The land on Lake Soda and the streams is rich and well timbered, and affords some of the most desirable situations for settlement.

RED RIVER COUNTY has a moderate inequality of surface, in many places agreeably varied by low, gently-sloping hills and broad valleys. The prairies are few, and in general small: the largest is the Sulphur Fork prairie, which is above one hundred miles in length, and eight or nine in breadth. Dense forests extend over nearly all the remaining surface. The "hickory uplands" near the southern border of Soda Lake constitute one of the most beautiful and productive sections of the Republic. The elevations in this part frequently rise from 100 to 200 feet above the surface of the lake.

Nearly the whole of the northern and middle portion, including two-thirds of the county, consists of arable land of the first quality. With the exception of the land bordering on the Sabine, which is excellent for tillage, the southern and south-eastern parts are sandy, and chiefly adapted for pasturage. In the northern and middle sections, most of the land is capable of yielding crops averaging, of Indian corn, seventy bushels, and of the common potato, 500 bushels to the acre.

The woods contain almost every variety of American oak, except live oak, together with pine, walnut, ash, hackberry, elm, pecan, and sassafras; the undergrowth comprises spice-wood, red bud, and wild peach.

FANNIN COUNTY, in common with that previously described, is situated on the Red River. Its lands, also, are good, and particularly adapted to the cultivation of cotton and Indian corn, and the raising of stock. The Red River bottoms and the uplands are equal to the best soil in Texas. Both these counties are pretty thickly settled. The Cross Timber extends across the extremity of Fannin County, near Mineral Creek, where the soil is very fertile and the trees large and tall. A considerable portion of the county is prairie. The land upon Bois d'Arc Creek, which separates Red River and Fannin Counties, is rich, well-timbered and well-watered, but the stream is not navigable.

NACOGDOCHES COUNTY, an extensive section of the former Mexican department of the same name, presents an undulating surface of woodland, with some pine hills, near the centre, and but little prairie. The Neches, Angelina, and Attoyac rivers afford rich black bottoms, and their tributaries large tracts of hickory uplands of a red and mulatto colour. North and south of Nacogdoches there is a considerable breadth of pine timber, the openings among which are sandy and barren. The soil is generally well adapted to the growth of cotton, the vine and other productions usually found in the same latitude. This county possesses many commercial facilities, is blessed with a dry, elastic atmosphere, excellent water, and springs applicable to medical uses. The saline springs, near the sources of the Neches, are capable of supplying all Eastern Texas with salt.

The Red Lands about San Augustine and Nacogdoches contain some of the most populous settlements in the Republic, and corn and cotton are extensively cultivated. The country watered by the Sabine and the Neches, with their branches, is much superior to the State of Louisiana in point of fertility; it is well adapted both to tillage and pasturage, and the streams afford ample facilities for conveying the produce to market. An extensive timber trade may be carried on in the pine districts, as suitable mill sites may be obtained in every quarter.

HOUSTON COUNTY is a prolonged series of gentle undulations, overshadowed by an almost continuous forest. Near the Trinity are a few small prairies, the largest of which (Mustang) is of a circular form, and about two miles broad. The soil is generally good, and of a mulatto colour, rather sandy near the Neches, but excellent near the Trinity; some of the finest arable lands are found on the hickory uplands of the northern and central parts. The air is pure, the water good and abundant, and the forests contain a great variety of timber, including black walnut, linden, hickory, "black jack," almost every species of oak, elm, and, in the southern and eastern sections, immense quantities of the best description of pine.

On lands not far from the Trinity, in this county, wheat has been harvested in the beginning of June; adjoining which were rich fields of cotton, maize, tobacco, rye, oats, barley and potatoes, both sweet and common. Stock are raised fifty per cent.

cheaper here than in the United States. Farms may be had in this district at from two to five dollars an acre.

LIBERTY COUNTY is level at the south, but gently undulating at the north. The northern division is almost a continuous forest; the southern, near the gulf, is an open, grassy plain, destitute of trees; the middle comprehends many extensive prairies, intersected by narrow lines of wood, bordering the numerous small streams and bayous. The general character of the soil is light and sandy. In the southern portion, it consists of a thin layer of black mould, resting upon a bed of sand and shells. In the middle and northern parts, the layer of black mould is usually a foot or eighteen inches deep, and the substratum of sand and shells gives place, in many extensive tracts, to a layer of yellow loam. Near the Trinity, the soil is generally rich and productive, but liable to inundation. The southern portion is best adapted to grazing; the uplands of the middle and northern parts contain some of the best cotton lands in Texas. Post oak, white oak, red oak, cypress, and pine, abound in the middle and northern sections.

The only stream of importance is the Trinity. Old river, which enters the Trinity a few miles above its mouth, runs through a low marshy country, with heavy timbered bottoms, the soil of which is well suited to the cultivation of sugar, cotton, or Indian corn, and affords an unbounded range for cattle. The country, for ninety miles above the bay, is generally low prairie, with occasional patches

of woodland; the bottoms are wide, fertile, and well-timbered. The lands on Kettle Creek, which enters the Trinity from the east, are poor, with the exception of the bottoms, which are wide and rich, with a thick undergrowth of cane. From the mouth of this creek to the old San Antonio Road, on the east side of the river, the country is a "pine barren," extending nearly to the Neches. On the west side of the river, the landscape presents a different aspect. Immediately above the town of Liberty commence a series of beautiful undulations, diversified by woodland and prairie, which stretch out to the San Jacinto. Above the old San Antonio Road the lands, on both sides of the Trinity, are rich, well-timbered, and watered to its source. This river flows through the district occupied until lately by the Cherokees and their associate bands, and consequently unsettled. It is all heavily timbered, with here and there a small prairie, and abounds in springs and running streams.

Several fine salt-springs have been discovered, from which the Indians manufactured considerable quantities of that indispensable commodity. Eighty miles above the old San Antonio road the prairie again commences—rich, rolling, and beautifully interspersed with timber; the land continues to wear the same appearance until the head waters of the Trinity are lost amidst the leafy shades of the Cross Timber.

The settlements on Red River approach within less than a hundred miles of those on the Trinity, and they will not long remain disunited. A great

proportion of this county is composed of a rich red soil, similar to that of San Augustine and Nacogdoches. The remainder is a strong black mould, with a basis of clay.

Galveston County, formerly included in the counties of Liberty, Brazoria, and Harrisburg, comprehends Galveston Island, Bolivar Point, and a section of land westward of the bay, intervening between Highland Creek and the mouth of Clear Creek. Galveston Island, situated at the entrance of the bay, is above thirty miles in length, with an average breadth of between three and four miles. A sound, about four miles wide, and from four to eight feet deep, divides it from the main land, to which it runs parallel. The island is destitute of timber, with the exception of three large live oaks near its centre, that serve as land-marks to the mariner. The soil, which is favourable to vegetation, is light, porous, of a darkish-grey colour, and towards the beach largely intermingled with sand. Opposite a gentle curvature of the island, on the bay side, is Pelican Island, a level, sandy tract, several hundred acres in extent. Bolivar Point, situated at the southern extremity of Liberty county, is a long, low, naked tongue of land, surmounted at its extremity by the remains of an old fort, consisting of a few embankments thrown up in a quadrangular form. The ruins of a fortress, said to have been constructed by Lafitte, the celebrated "pirate of the gulf," are pointed out at about two miles from the eastern extremity on the western shore. The sea breeze on the island is delightfully

refreshing in summer. The shores of Galveston abound in oyster-beds and excellent fish, and its prairies, in winter, are the resort of immense flocks of wild fowl.

HARRISBURG COUNTY is remarkably level at the south, and gently undulating at the north. The streams and the northern coast of the bay are lined with forests; the remainder of the county, comprising nearly four-fifths of its surface, is open prairie. Within ten miles of the coast the soil is rather poor, consisting of a thin layer of black mould resting upon a bed of sand and shells. At the central and northern parts, the layer of black mould is, in many places, three or four feet deep, and the substratum is composed of sand and shells, alternating with deep beds of reddish loam. The western section contains some of the finest land in this division of Texas. Cotton, maize, oats, and potatoes are produced in abundance. Two crops of potatoes are frequently raised, affording, it is alleged, eight hundred bushels an acre in one year.

The principal streams are the San Jacinto, Buffalo Bayou, Spring, Cedar, and Clear Creeks. Pine predominates in the forests bordering the San Jacinto, Buffalo Bayou, and their numerous branches. There are also great quantities of cypress, magnolia, cedar, black oak, white oak, red cedar, and a tree called Spanish oak, so much resembling live oak, as to be frequently mistaken for it. Large revenues will eventually be derived from the immense quantities of valuable timber contained in the forests of this county.

The land on the tributaries of the San Jacinto, like that on the river itself, is fertile, and calculated both for pasturage and agriculture. The bay of San Jacinto is surrounded by rich land, with many picturesque sites. Salt is obtained at a spring situated at Cedar Point, at the mouth of the bay. Cedar Creek flows through a fertile prairie country, of which the bottoms are well timbered. There are several beautiful islands in the bay, which, at a moderate outlay, might be rendered very desirable for private residence.

From the mouth of Buffalo Bayou to Houston the land is of good quality, but very low and muddy in winter. Several steam saw-mills built upon this stream furnish large quantities of lumber. A few miles above Houston the bayou divides, and diverges into the broad prairies, and having little timber to shelter it, becomes almost dry in the summer. A level prairie extends above thirty miles westward of Houston, the soil of which is a thin mould resting upon a light-coloured clay, chiefly applicable for grazing purposes. There are, however, occasional woodlands and streams, with fertile tracts in their vicinity.

Montgomery County has a range of high hills extending across its northern section: the central and southern sections partake of the superficial character of the undulating region. The streams are skirted with broad belts of timber: the other parts of the county are small prairies, embellished with insular groves, except the north-eastern portion, which is almost entirely woodland.

The soil of the bottoms is generally a very rich black mould, often four or five feet deep. On the northern ridges there is a scanty growth of post oak, pine, and "black jack." The prairies of the southern and central sections afford excellent pasture.

The San Jacinto river rises in this county, and flows, in a south-easterly direction, through a country agreeably diversified with valuable woodlands and fertile prairies. The woods are of post, red and white oak, magnolia, cypress, ash, hickory, elm, pecan, mulberry, and "short leaf pine," with, in many places, a dense undergrowth of cane. Immense quantities of excellent building timber cover the section between the San Jacinto and Lake Creek.

The population of Montgomery county is rapidly increasing, and promises to be ere long one of the most closely settled sections of the Republic.

Robertson and Milam Counties, which lie contiguous and have similar features, include a territory sufficiently large to form a respectable Federal State. As population extends, new counties will be formed within their limits.

They contain an immense quantity of valuable timber on the streams and uplands, and are well supplied with springs and rivulets. The district generally presents a gently undulating surface; but, towards the north-west, there is a hilly ridge of considerable elevation. The principal forest trees are white, post, red and Spanish oak, pecan, cotton-wood, ash, elm, black walnut, and holly.

The soil of these counties is of the best quality,

and is capable of affording a great variety of produce. The crops of cotton and Indian corn are excellent, and potatoes, common and sweet, of a superior kind, are yielded in abundance. There is a profusion of indigo of spontaneous growth, which unquestionably might be cultivated with advantage. This portion of Texas will be one of the finest grain-growing countries in the world. For rye and oats it cannot be surpassed; and ten bushels of excellent wheat have been raised from one peck of seed. There is an ample range of nutritious pasture, and every facility for rearing cattle. Vast herds of buffaloes frequent the northern and western sections.

In their "weed prairies," the counties of Robertson and Milam possess a characteristic of the soil peculiar to themselves. These prairies, unlike most of those in other localities, are covered with a thick growth of weeds instead of grass. These weeds are generally from ten to fifteen feet high, and so dense that they are almost impenetrable to man or horse, resembling in some respects, the cane-brakes of the alluvial region. The settlers highly estimate the productive power of the weed prairies. The soil is chiefly of a light mulatto colour, and remarkably fertile. In order to prepare it for cultivation, it is only necessary to beat down and burn the weeds, after which the soil is in a condition to receive the seed, being almost as loose and friable as a bed of ashes. In planting these prairies, the plough is seldom used, but, instead of it, the settlers apply a large spiked roller, usually formed of a log, with harrow teeth placed at intervals, so as to form holes when dragged over the ground. Into these holes the

Indian corn is dropped, and then covered slightly with earth, which is generally "kicked" over it. The seed thus rudely and carelessly planted soon throws up vigorous blades, which require no farther attention until harvest, except light hoeing. The crop raised in this fashion is said to average fifty bushels an acre.

The principal rivers are the Navosota, the Little Brazos, and the Brazos. The Navosota, although it has a course of one hundred and fifty miles, is a small stream, which may at some expense be rendered navigable by keel boats for forty or fifty miles. Its waters are clear and wholesome—its bottoms rich and extensive, and rarely inundated—its whole course is through a prairie country, containing large groves of timber, suitable for fuel, building, and the purposes of agriculture.

The country, watered by the Little, or San Andres River and its tributaries, has a general uniformity in quality and appearance. It is pretty equally divided between woodland and prairie; the bottoms on the streams are extremely rich and beautiful, the water pure, and the uplands of the highest order of fertility. Its prairies enjoy an almost perennial bloom of flowers, and even the wild Indian hunters have been so captivated by its attractions, that they have named it the "Land of Beauty."

The Little Brazos runs parallel with the main stream of the Brazos for about seventy miles; the distance between them varying from three to six. Rich timbered bottoms cover the space between the two rivers, but east of the little Brazos, the prairie and wooded upland approach to the margin of the

stream, affording the most eligible locations, while the bottoms furnish timber, with an unbounded range for cattle and hogs.

The country towards the source of the Rio Bosque is beautiful, and the land fertile and well timbered; but, towards its mouth, it flows through an extensive prairie, almost destitute of wood. The land upon Nolan's river—a red muddy stream, which rises in the prairies above the Cross Timber—is good, and well wooded in its lower section. The Red Fork, which has its source near the Red River, rises in the forests, but passes through a prairie country for the greater part of its course. The waters of this stream derive from a soil impregnated with oxide of iron the red colour with which they tinge the Brazos.

Below the mouth of the Palo Pinto is a mountain about six hundred feet in height, called the High Peak; near this place the Cross Timber extends beyond the Brazos, in a south-westerly direction, to the Colorado.

The land upon the Tahcajunova and its tributaries is rich and well timbered. The Incoque, a large branch of the Brazos, has almost its entire course through a prairie country, diversified by some scattered musquit trees, with a fringe of timber upon the banks and an occasional grove of post oak. Fifty miles above the mouth of this river is the Salt Lake of the Brazos, above twenty miles in length, and from six to seven in breadth. The salt, which crystallises at this place in great abundance, will supply the wants of the future settlers on the Upper Brazos and the Colorado, and during

high water, may be floated down the former river to the falls.

A bed of coal more than a mile in length, extends across the Brazos, and ramifies towards the Little Brazos and the San Andres, from which it may, without much difficulty, be transported downward at high water. In the district around the San Andres and its tributaries, white marble, granite, and blue and grey lime-stone have been discovered; lead, copper, and iron enrich the mountains where these streams have their sources.

Brazoria County is a uniformly level plain: for ten miles from the coast an open prairie destitute of trees; in every other part, diversified by forests of live oak, which border the streams that intersect the prairies in every direction.

With the exception of the tract on the coast, which, though thin and sandy, is suitable for pasturage, the soil is characterised by extraordinary fertility. It consists of a deep black mould, resting upon a substratum of red loam, in many places from ten to fifteen feet deep, and totally free from stones. Indeed, unless introduced from a distance, there is hardly a stone the size of a pebble to be found in all this district. Cotton and Indian corn are extensively cultivated and yield large returns, culinary vegetables thrive well, and the increase of horned cattle, which pasture in the prairies and woodlands during the whole year, is astonishing. Many parts of the Lower Brazos are pronounced unhealthy; yet some of the wealthiest planters of Texas reside there. The water is not considered wholesome, un-

less boiled or filtered; rain-water, which is preserved for domestic use, has been found to contribute to the preservation of health.

Around Galveston Bay and the Brazos are great quantities of game; herds of deer at all times, and flocks of wild geese, swans, brant, ducks, &c., in the winter. Excellent fish also may be taken in abundance, and with little trouble, and the coast can hardly be surpassed for oysters, whether as regards quality or quantity. A succession of small lakes, named Cedar Lake Creek, is surrounded by a forest of cedar, producing very valuable timber, long, straight, and free from knots.

The Brazos is navigable for large steamers throughout the county, and the San Bernard and Caney by small boats for thirty or forty miles. The district watered by the San Bernard and Caney is of exuberant fertility. Towards the source of the former river there is an equal distribution of woodland and prairie. The lands upon old Caney are deemed by some superior to those on the San Bernard. The bottoms extend from stream to stream, and there is not an acre of poor land in all this section. Its woods are of cedar, live oak, pecan, &c., with a thick undergrowth of cane. It combines more advantages for planting than any known portion of the globe. Planters of acknowledged veracity state that it is not uncommon to pick 4000 pounds of seed cotton from an acre of ground. Sugar would be equally productive: from fifty to seventy bushels of Indian corn are raised to the acre, and cattle and swine are reared so easily that the

expense of labourers' food is merely nominal. Lands can be purchased at from three to seven dollars an acre in this locality, which is, at present, the principal cotton region of Texas.

AUSTIN AND FORT BEND COUNTIES (formerly Austin County) are uniformly level at the south, but gently undulating at the north. The surface is open prairie, except on the margin of the streams, the smallest of which are lined with forests, from a few rods to three or four miles in width. The trees are chiefly white, post, red and live oak, pecan, cottonwood, ash, elm, and holly.

The soil of the northern and eastern divisions is excellent; towards the west, and south-west, it is somewhat sandy, and much less productive. Between the San Bernard and the Brazos is an immense open prairie, better adapted to pasturage than tillage. The undergrowth of the best land in the Brazos Valley is cane and the species of laurel called "wild peach." A settler wishing to describe his farm as first-rate, will say it is all *peach and cane land.*

There is a considerable number of inhabitants in these counties, some of them from New England, but the greater proportion from the Western and Southern States of the Union.

WASHINGTON COUNTY has an undulating surface, diversified by occasional hills of a moderate elevation and smoothly rounded summits. In the north-eastern section are ample forests, embracing numer-

ous small prairies. In other parts of the county the prairies are large and interspersed with " islands" of wood.

The bottom lands of the streams are composed of a deep rich loam, resembling most of the soil of the Brazos Valley. The soil of the numerous prairies is generally rich and mellow, and of different colours, dark-grey, red, and chocolate. Both bottoms and prairies yield a thick mat of grass, and are well adapted for pasturage. Indian corn, cotton, potatoes, rye, and oats are the chief productions; wheat, sugar cane, and indigo would, it is believed, do well, and the cultivation of a variety of vegetables and fruits has been tried with success.

The Brazos and Navosota Rivers, and Yegua, New Year's, and Caney Creeks are the principal streams. The Brazos in this county is about eighty yards wide, but is obstructed by falls, or rapids, for a part of its course. Above these falls it is said to be navigable for vessels drawing three feet of water. These streams, some of which have excellent mill sites, are fed by innumerable springs of sweet and wholesome water.

MATAGORDA COUNTY, with the exception of a slight undulation at the north, is level. The smaller streams are bordered by narrow belts of timber, the Colorado and Caney by forests, extending in many places six or seven miles on either side. The remainder of the county, comprehending more than two-thirds of its surface, is open prairie.

This is one of the most productive counties of Texas; the general character of the soil being a very

deep, rich, black mould, reposing on a bed of reddish loam destitute of stones. The soil on the Caney is of a mulatto colour—light and friable near the banks, but clammy and adhesive adjoining the prairies. It is noted for its singular fertility; in no part of the Repûblic are there larger crops of cotton, maize, sugar, and potatoes. The American Aloe grows luxuriantly on the numerous shell banks near the coast.

Matagorda Bay is surrounded by a prairie country interspersed with groves, consisting of live oak, cedar, ash, pecan, and hackberry. The tract bordering on the Colorado is pleasant, fertile, and healthy, and many causes unite to make it one of the most desirable portions of the Republic. The lower section cannot be excelled for planting purposes, and the central and upper sections are admirably adapted for pasturage and the rearing of hogs and cattle. Veins of gold and silver exist in the mountains, and quarries of granite and limestone may be opened in many places. Coal and iron ore abound upon the river.

COLORADO AND FAYETTE COUNTIES are more rolling and better watered than Matagorda county, and present agreeable changes of scenery. The land is fertile, consisting in part of a deep black mould, intermixed with sand. At Egypt, a wealthy and respectable settlement, situated at the crossing of the old San Felipè and Victoria road, sugar has been successfully cultivated. Indigo grows spontaneously, and several varieties of excellent grapes abound in the forests skirting the streams. The sweet and

common potato yield immense crops of the best quality, and maize, cotton, wheat, rye, and oats are well adapted to the soil. A species of rooted bulbous grass grows upon the prairies, and furnishes ample and welcome provision for swine.

Cummin's Creek flows through a country equally divided between woodland and prairie, and has rich and extensive bottoms supporting a growth of post, black, red, and live oak, pecan, cedar, cottonwood, elm, and hackberry. On the banks of the creek are some excellent stone quarries.

On the lower side of Buckner's Creek, in Fayette County, rises a "bluff" above 300 feet in height, and on the side towards the river almost perpendicular. There are springs upon the summit forming in their descent a picturesque cascade, the vicinity of which abounds in limestone spar. The plain, on the crest of the mount, is of great beauty, and commands a magnificent prospect of wooded and flower-spangled prairies, winding streams, dusky forests, and distant mountains. The land upon Buckner's Creek is very rich, and sufficiently timbered for agricultural purposes.

In its course through these counties, the Colorado is a deep and rapid stream, about one hundred yards wide; its banks are seldom overflowed.

THE COUNTIES OF BASTROP AND TRAVIS (formerly Bastrop) resemble in the lower section Colorado and Fayette. A vast chain of prairie, extending from the western bank of the Colorado to the mountains, is inferior to no part of Texas in beauty of aspect and fertility of soil. The bottoms on the

eastern side are about four miles in width. The Colorado bottoms differ much from those of the Brazos and the rivers of Eastern Texas, which are always covered with a heavy growth of timber. Many of the richest bottoms of the Colorado are prairie of extraordinary fertility, skirted with wooded uplands, lying a short distance backward. These elevated uplands are from four to six miles in breadth; in some places, tolerably fertile, but, in general, gravelly and broken. They are the dividing ridges between the Brazos and the Colorado. The land upon Cedar Creek is prairie, with the exception of the bottoms, which are narrow and covered with cedar. Upon Walnut Creek the land is generally good, but, occasionally, broken and hilly. The hilly portion is timbered with white, red and post oak, pine, and cedar. A large proportion of the country through which Walnut Creek flows is prairie. Beauty and fertility characterise the course of the pure waters of the Rio Blanco.

Barker's, Walberger's, and Walnut Creeks, rise in hills on the eastern side of the Colorado, at a distance varying from two to five miles. The lands between the hills and the river afford the most eligible situations for settlement, whether as regards the beauty of the scenery, the fertility of the soil, the excellence of the water, or the purity of the air. Onion Creek flows through a fine rolling country of mingled prairie and woodland: about ten miles from its mouth there is a grove of the best description of cypress, to the extent probably of six thousand acres. There are, besides, cedar, live oak, black walnut, white, red, and post oak, hackberry,

mulberry, wild peach, &c. There is an excellent opening at this place for a saw-mill and lumber-trade. Just above La Grange, on the eastern side of the Colorado, about four miles from its bank, is a grove of excellent yellow pine, from two to four miles in width, which extends above the town of Bastrop, where are three steam saw-mills, that supply timber to the adjoining country.

On the eastern border of the Colorado, about four miles below a range of high lands, named the Colorado Mountains, is the infant city of Austin, the capital of Travis County, and the seat of government of the Republic of Texas. The most elevated of the hilly range above Austin is not higher than six or seven hundred feet, and the chain does not extend farther than about thirty-five miles. The hills contain extensive quarries of marble, limestone, and granite, and will, for many years, supply the adjoining country with timber. They are intersected by fertile and pleasant valleys, watered by crystal springs and perennial streams. The pasturage of wild rye and musquit-grass is exuberant, and there is an ample proportion of land for profitable cultivation. These hills are of soft acclivity, and on the summits of some are tracts of table-land, well adapted to the culture of grain, the vine, and different sorts of fruit. From the top of the peak called Mount Bonnell, which overlooks Austin, there is a perpendicular fall of seven hundred feet to the bed of the Colorado, and the prospect around is one of the loveliest in nature. Although these hills have not been scientifically explored, they are known to

contain valuable metallic ore, with quarries of marble, limestone, granite, and beds of gypsum and anthracite coal.

The Agua Fria rises in the Valley of Flowers, which contains above ten thousand acres, about a third prairie, and the remainder woodland. Manufacturing establishments might be formed with advantage in this charming valley.

The Piedernales River flows through a district almost entirely elevated table-land; its banks are very steep, and its bottoms not exceeding from one to three hundred yards in width. These bottoms are covered with a thick growth of cypress, and are bounded by perpendicular rocks, frequently three hundred feet in height. Ascending the rock from the cypress bottom, there appears an extensive sweep of rich musquit prairie, abounding in musquit timber, with insulated groves of live and post oak and cedar. This land would produce cotton and sugar, and is admirably adapted for grazing and the culture of small grains.

About twenty-five miles from the Colorado, on a north-western branch of the Piedernales, is a rock, considered one of the natural curiosities of Texas. It is about two hundred feet high, of an oval form, and half embedded in the soil. It is composed of parti-coloured flints, and reflects the sunbeams with great brilliancy. A spring gushing forth near its summit sprinkles its sides with water. Owing, it is supposed, to the presence of some phosphoric substance, it wears an illuminated aspect on dark nights. This rock is held sacred by the Indians,

who visit it at stated periods, for the purpose of paying homage to the Great Spirit, after their wild and primitive fashion.

On the Piedernales, and throughout the hilly country, every hollow tree is filled with bees.

The Llano River flows through an undulating country, well watered, and suited to farming and grazing. The San Saba River, which, through its whole course of about two hundred miles, runs between high-land ranges, waters a valley extending from six to twenty-five miles. Timber is abundant, and for the European settler there could hardly be selected a more captivating spot.

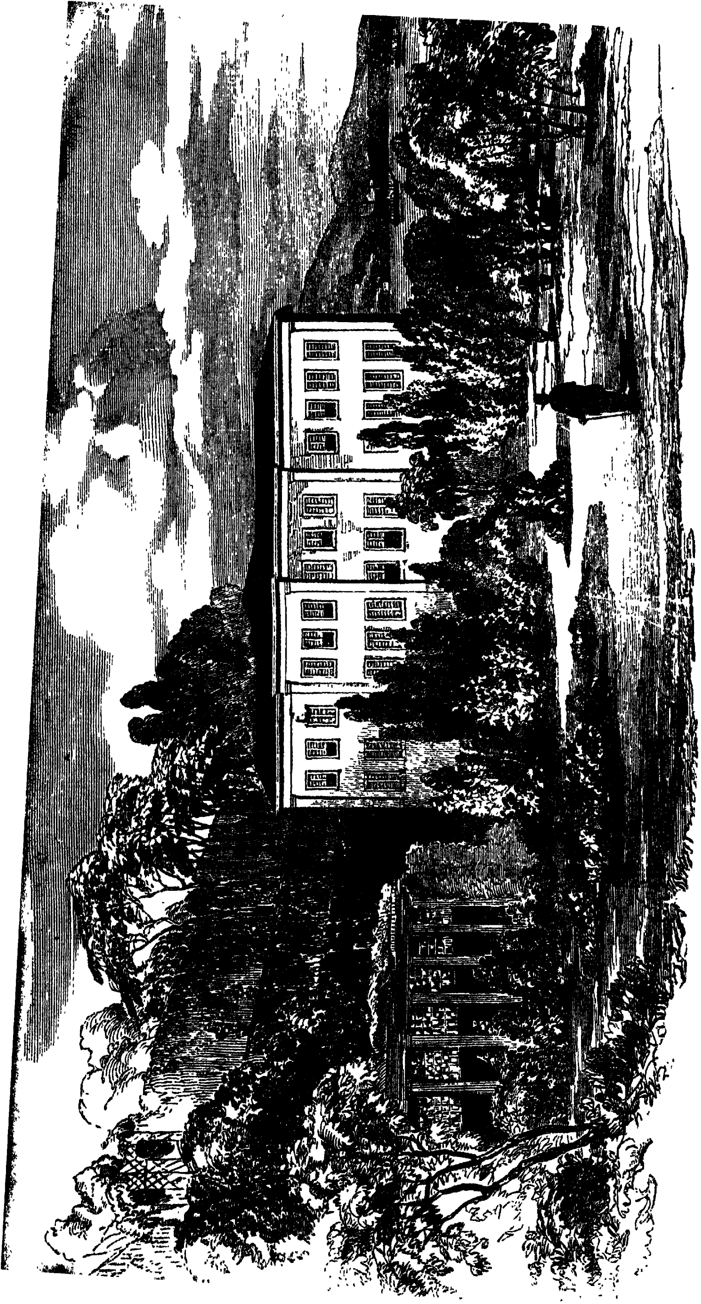
About thirty miles from the mouth of the San Saba there was once a Spanish Mission and fort, the destruction of which is thus recorded in Mexican tradition:—

Prosperity reigned at the post, which carried on an extensive trade with the Comanche Indians, and a large revenue was derived from certain silver mines in its vicinity. The mines occupied about one hundred labourers; the post was protected by an equal number of soldiers, and there were some women, who manufactured articles for the Indian trade. At a time when all the soldiers, save about a dozen, were absent on an expedition, the Comanches appeared, under pretence of traffic, and were admitted to the fort in great numbers. At a signal from the chief, the Indians drew weapons concealed under their buffalo robes, and massacred the small guard and the women. The labourers in the mines fled, and were butchered in detail. The priest alone escaped, and by a miracle. The holy

man having fled to the Colorado River, the waters divided, permitted him to pass through, and closed upon the pursuing Indians, consigning them to a common grave. After great suffering, the priest reached the Spanish mission of San Juan, at that period the only settlement on the San Antonio River. The absent soldiers, returning in a few days to the fort, where lay the mangled bodies of their companions, found the banks of the Colorado covered with dead Indians, and as they could discern no marks of violence upon them, they pronounced it a retributive miracle, and named the river "*Brazos de Dios*," or "the Arm of God." In the ignorance of after-times, it received the name of Colorado, which previously distinguished the red and muddy stream now known as the Brazos. The preceding tradition is devoutly believed by the old Mexicans about San Antonio, and is a fair sample of the monkish legends which in Spanish America usurp the place of rational religion.

Jackson County, being situated in the region of the "rolling prairie," has a gently undulating surface. It is an open district, with the exception of the forests that border its streams. The soil is a rich black mould, very deep, upon a stratum of red loam. There is hardly an acre of bad land in all the county. There is a large spontaneous growth of indigo, and the general produce is similar to that of Austin and Brazoria.

The county is well watered by numerous springs. The principal streams are the Navidad and La Baca, which, with their tributaries, flow through a beau-



tiful and fertile country. A very enterprising and industrious community of farmers from the United States have established themselves at a place called "Clark's Settlement," on the La Baca, and under their auspices the locality is rapidly improving. The Carancahua and Trespalacios are small, sluggish streams.

Victoria and Gonzales Counties present a continued series of rolling prairies, gently undulating at the south, and swelling into bold acclivities at the north. The streams are generally lined with forests; elsewhere, the country is open, but beautifully relieved by insulated groves of post oak and musquit.

Along the La Baca, Guadalupe, and San Antonio Rivers, the soil is a black, rich, and remarkably productive mould; between the borders of these streams it is in many places intermixed with sand, which renders it less compact, though not less productive. The crops of cotton, sugar-cane, maize, wheat, rye, oats, and barley are excellent. On the wooded banks of the streams vines grow luxuriantly, and produce a wine considered equal to good Oporto. The forest-trees are live, post, and Spanish oak, elm, ash, black walnut, cypress, musquit, and pine. Between the coast and the town of Victoria good cotton and sugar lands may be procured at from fifty cents to one dollar an acre. It is believed that, with slight improvement, the Guadalupe would be navigable for steam-boats as far as the town of Gonzales, which is situated in the heart of a fertile and healthy country.

Within the last two or three years, new farms have been opened in every direction between the Guadalupe and the Colorado settlements, and have extended considerably above the town of Gonzales; and locations have been made high up on the San Marcos, in a region previously abandoned to the marauding Indian.

Agriculture will flourish on the lands of the San Marcos. The source of this river is girdled by hills, which overlook a valley of singular beauty, affording an eligible site for manufactures. The lands upon Sandy Creek are good and tolerably well timbered. Peach Creek flows through a rich and beautiful district. The Coleto flows through a fine, picturesque country, with sufficient timber for the uses of the settler.

Refugio and Goliad Counties have a generally level surface, imperceptibly ascending from the coast. The prevailing character of the land is open prairie, spotted with islands of wood. Broad and dense forests flank the borders of the Guadalupe and San Antonio. Towards the south, the woods are of live oak and musquit; northward, of white and post oak, elm, hackberry, pecan, and mulberry.

The soil is the usual rich black mould, on a stratum of sandy loam, most of it admirably adapted to the cultivation of cotton and sugar. The North-western section, where there are a few sandy ridges supporting a thin growth of post oak and black jack, is better calculated for pasturage than agriculture. The whole of the back country affords a magnificent range for cattle. The land upon Aran-

saso Bay and its tributaries is equal to any in the country for the production of cotton and sugar. A light kind of tobacco was formerly cultivated in this district by the Mexican inhabitants.

About ten miles below Goliad the San Antonio is navigable by small steam-boats. The Refugio, Aransas, and Chiltipin, are small but partially navigable streams. Aransas Bay abounds in turtle and every variety of fish found in the Gulf of Mexico; the islands of the bay and the neighbouring prairies are the winter resorts of multitudes of wild fowl. Droves of wild horses and herds of deer browze upon the prairies, and the forests are stocked with the wild turkey and a species of grouse.

THE COUNTY OF BEXAR comprehends an extensive section of the Mexican department bearing the same name, besides an immense tract beyond the boundary of Texas Proper. It is a country of rolling prairie, intersected by hills towards the north and west, above the town of San Antonio. Save on the streams, which are generally fringed with forests, the country displays an open landscape, with scattered clumps of musquit and post oak crowning the summits of the undulating grounds.

The soil generally consists of a sandy loam, exceedingly productive. Some tracts, under a rude cultivation for nearly half a century, seem to have lost none of their original fertility. Irrigation may easily be directed over an immense surface capable of yielding abundant crops of cotton, sugar, tobacco, indigo, maize, wheat (of good quality), rye, oats, millet, beans, and various culinary vegetables. The

vine and the olive, and indeed most of the products of the temperate zone, may be cultivated with success, and there are several kinds of excellent fruit, especially figs, which are reputed to be the best in Texas. The ever-verdant musquit-grass carpets the whole district with the best pasturage. The nopal is of frequent growth, and forms impenetrable hedges, eight or ten feet high, to the extent of several acres. Sheep may be reared with advantage in the high lands and their vicinity—indeed Spain herself has not a more congenial climate, walks more ample, or furnished with a more suitable herbage for the support of that valuable animal.

The live oak predominates in the forest; the pecan, bearing delicate nuts of unusual size, is plentiful; cypress is found on the Medina; there are also red and post oak, and every part is sprinkled with musquit, which yields a valuable gum.

Limestone abounds in this district; flint and several varieties of sandstone are found on the San Antonio and Cibolo. There are also numerous beds of gypsum. On a bank of the San Antonio, fifty miles from the sea, a deposit of marine shells of a new species has been found imbedded in the alluvion. Near the Cibolo, just below the crossing of the Gonzales road, are the white Sulphur Springs of Bexar, celebrated for their medicinal qualities. The water boils up from the bottom of a large basin in the solid rock, and flows off with a bold current. The environs are beautiful and fertile, and at a short distance is an extensive post oak "barren," sufficiently furnished with game to afford amusement to the lovers of field sports for many years. The largest live oak in any country grows upon the

Cibolo. The valley watered by the San Antonio unites all the attractions of a happy climate, charming scenery, and an exuberant soil. Sugar and cotton were once extensively cultivated near the town of San Antonio, but, since the Mexican revolution, the place has lost its remnant of prosperity, owing partly to internal discord, and partly to Indian irruptions.

On the borders of the Medina River the soil is a dark loam, and there is an abundance of wood for fuel. The San Miguel and its tributaries run through an extensive open prairie; the Arroyo Seco rises in a rich and picturesque valley, about twenty-five miles in length, and from four to ten in breadth. The mountains contiguous to this valley are believed to be rich in the precious metals.

The lands on the Rio Frio and its tributaries are fertile, but deficient in timber, of which there is only a light growth upon the streams. The uplands in this section are generally rocky and steril. The Arroyo de Uvalde, a branch of the Rio Frio, has its source at the Cañon de Uvalde, which derives its name from a Spanish officer who defended it successfully with twenty soldiers against the attack of a large body of Comanches. The valley below the pass is distant about sixty miles north-west of the city of San Antonio. It is about twenty miles long, and varies in width from two to five miles, its greatest length being from north to south. The hills on every side rise abruptly from the bottom of the valley, and present, in many places, perpendicular walls of rock several hundred feet high. At the foot of these hills, numerous springs issuing, form rills which

unite near the middle of the valley in a beautiful rivulet, that after meandering throughout nearly its whole extent, at length emerges through a deep gorge at its southern extremity. A narrow belt of woods extends along the margin of this stream, and pretty islets of timber are scattered at intervals over the surface of the valley, forming a pleasing contrast to the open grassy plains of the prairie, and the grey rugged precipices of the surrounding hills. The only passage from the valley towards the north is a narrow cleft in the rocks, about eight feet wide, winding through cliffs 300 or 400 feet high. The path through this cleft gradually ascends, until, at the distance of about three miles from the valley, it opens upon the extensive table-lands northwardly above, and which are apparently illimitable in extent. This narrow pass affords the only convenient path within the distance of many miles, by which the Comanches can descend with their horses to the country bordering the sea-coast. A tradition is current at Bexar that, many years since, a party of Spanish soldiers, who had defeated a company of Comanches, pursued them through the Cañon de Uvalde nearly to the middle of this pass, when they found the passage completely obstructed by the carcases of four or five dead horses, which these Indians had killed, and, in this manner prevented the further progress of their pursuers. This valley is the great thoroughfare of the Indians. The outlet towards the south is a narrow gorge between the hills, and is about 300 yards wide, affording a passage for the rivulet which flows into the Rio Frio. The rocks of this region consist chiefly of grey limestone, ar-

ranged in horizontal beds. The valley will form one of the best situations for a frontier force, as fifty brave men could easily defend the pass at its northern extremity against the united warriors of the whole Comanche tribe. The land is capable of producing the necessaries of life in great abundance.

The country lying between the Leona and the Rio Grande was explored in 1834 by Dr. J. C. Beales and Mr. T. A. Power, who made the following report to the Rio Grande Land Company with which they were associated.

"The banks of the Leona are well-timbered, the stream about fifteen feet wide, with a current of three miles an hour. The soil is a dark rich loam, of the first quality for agriculture. This stream is not more than ten feet below the surface. From the Leona to the river Nueces the lands are of the same description; indeed this section is fertile from the Medina to the Nueces. Where we crossed the Nueces, the stream runs about four miles, and was about fifteen feet in width with frequent windings. The banks of this river are well-timbered and the musquit tree abounds. Three miles from the river is a pond or lake two or three leagues long and 100 yards in breadth, containing a variety of good fish.

"The lands from the Nueces to the lake are of the best quality, but gradually diminish in fertility, until you arrive at a sandy waste about five miles from the lake. This waste extends, as we have been informed, about fifteen or twenty miles on each side of the road. After leaving the sandy waste, we came to a section of second-rate land, which extends to the Rio Grande, and is almost destitute of wood

and water; there being but one pond, and the wood small and bushy, fit only for fences. Water, however, may be procured by sinking, and according to information we obtained, about fifteen feet from the surface. When we came to the Rio Grande, we found the banks of an even character, with but little wood. The river is about 300 yards wide at the pass, with about four feet of water and a current of four miles. Our intention was to have gone down the left bank of the river, to a place called Pallaforce, distant from the pass, say, fifty miles; but, from information obtained from Mr. Egerton (the surveyor of the colony) of the nature of that part of the grant and its bad situation for the first colonists, for the want of proper soil and permanent water, we determined to proceed higher up, and directed our course to Las Moras, a pretty stream gently winding its way through a very pleasant country, a distance of thirty-five or forty miles, where it empties into the Rio Grande. This stream is not more than eight or ten feet wide, about four feet deep, its banks low, and the country on both sides easily irrigated. On this stream we planted the first colonists, distant about fifteen miles from the nearest point of the Rio Grande. The water here is perpetual, and is never less than three or four feet; the soil is of first quality, with sufficient timber on its banks for the necessary use of building, &c. A few miles below the Villa de Dolores (the name of the settlement) we discovered a very eligible mill site, having a fall of about fifteen feet and abundance of stone. We named it the falls of St. Patrick. About twelve miles north-west of this stream is another called

Piedras Pintas; running parallel and northward of Piedras Pintas, is a third which runs parallel to the stream called Sequete. All of these are of similar extent and character, and, from their situation, their contiguity to the Rio Grande, and the richness of the soil, there can be but little doubt of its becoming a fine agricultural country. Where the town of Dolores is laid out, the low level lands are very extensive and capable of being irrigated with little trouble. The soil is a rich dark loam, intermixed with small particles of limestone, of which there appears to be a great abundance, as it shows itself in various places in the vicinity in thick flaky masses. On the Rio Grande there is a great abundance of bituminous coal, a specimen of which will be produced to the Company. This mine being on the Company's lands, only fifty miles from the colony, will afford fuel for any manufactories that may be established, as well as furnishing a supply for steam-boats, although there is at present an ample quantity of wood for that purpose. The distance from the town of San Antonio de Bexar to the Rio Grande is, by the existing road, about 150 miles, which can be materially shortened, by laying a road from the town of Dolores in a straight line to Bexar; crossing the heads of the streams above-mentioned. This would facilitate the erection of towns and villages along the line, and the opening of the back country, which is of a still more fertile character. With these advantages, the Company could have little trouble in placing the colonists on the streams downwards. The plains on the Rio Grande are extensive, but would be difficult of irrigation. We think that if a commercial town

were established between Las Moras and Piedras Pintas, it would never fail of abundant supplies from the fertile lands of these streams.

"We are aware how anxious the Company is to have every information relative to the Rio Grande. We have, in consequence, been earnest in our enquiries and, from all we can collect, there is little doubt of its navigation being free during *eight months*. A steam-boat has been as high as Alcantro, a town on the right bank of the river, about 145 miles from Matamoras, and had a full cargo down. At high water, there were no obstacles whatever."

San Patricio County embraces an immense extent of country, but a small proportion of which lies within the limits of Texas proper.

The lands on the Nueces River and Corpus Christi Bay are of extraordinary beauty and fertility, and admirably adapted to the cultivation of cotton and sugar and the raising of stock. The surface is undulating, and bears a good growth of timber. A mild and healthful climate, united with other advantages, renders this a most desirable district for settlement. From the town of San Patricio, about forty miles from the bay, to the mouth of the Rio Frio, the land bordering the river, for fifteen or twenty miles on either side, is like that about San Patricio, deep, black and rich, and not to be surpassed for crops of cotton and sugar. The river admits of being rendered navigable for small boats as high as the Rio Frio. This section affords, perhaps, the best range for cattle in Texas, being free from trouble-

some insects, and its musquit prairies supplying the best pasture. It is not uncommon to see a drove of from 1500 to 2000 wild horses, some of which are remarkable for symmetry and speed, bounding over these prairies. Salt Creek and two other small streams, which enter Corpus Christi Bay west of the mouth of the Nueces, flow through a fertile section of musquit prairie, almost entirely destitute of timber. In travelling over these far-spreading prairies, the immense herds of wild cattle and mustangs are the only objects that relieve the uniformity of the scene.

The brackish waters of the San Gertrudes pass through a rich musquit prairie destitute of wood, save a small quantity on the banks of the stream. A fresh water lake, communicating by a rivulet with the San Gertrudes, is situated in the midst of a fertile country, and has a good supply of musquit and live oak timber. The Los Olmos flows through a rich but untimbered prairie. A few miles south of the Los Olmos, commences the barren sandy ridge, distinguished by the name of the Wild Horse Desert, which extends nearly one hundred miles inland. It is so utterly arid and sterile that it is unfrequented even by reptiles and insects, and the traveller rarely encounters a living thing in traversing its desolate surface. About two miles south of this desert, on the margin of a beautiful and fertile prairie, is the celebrated Salt Lake, which crystallizes so fast that a hundred mules may be loaded from it, and, in twenty-four hours, the place cannot be distinguished from which the salt has been taken. There have been a few settlements about the lake, but they are nearly all deserted; it is, however,

annually visited by hundreds of Mexicans, for the purpose of procuring salt. The lake is surrounded by tracts of the best pasturage,—the resort of wild horses and cattle, deer and elk. A rich musquit prairie extends between the lake and the Rio Grande, and borders the course of the Sal Colorado.

After crossing the Wild Horse Desert, the land southward to the Rio Grande has little variety of aspect, being almost uniformly fertile musquit prairie, with hardly any timber except musquit and live oak, of which there are, in some parts, great quantities. The nopal of this district attains a height of fifteen or twenty feet, and is very beautiful in the spring when it is garnished with its white, yellow, and deep crimson flowers. The valuable Mexican aloe, the Spanish palmetto, and many varieties of ornamental shrubs and flowers, with wild fruits of exquisite flavour, lend an attraction to this almost uninhabited region, which, with the exception of the Wild Horse Desert, is said to be as well adapted for the cultivation of cotton and sugar as any portion of North America. One hundred miles above the Presidio (military post) of the Rio Grande, the river Puerco enters the Rio Grande from the north. The country on the Puerco is but little known. A young American who was captured by the Comanches, and subsequently escaped to Santa Fé, and returned from thence to Texas, described the valley of the Puerco and the adjacent country, which he had visited with his captors, in these terms:

"On either side of the valley, lofty mountains raise their bold summits in the distant horizon. The

valley is wide in some places,—the timber and prairie alternate. On the heads of some of the little streams of the Puerco, are high prairies, level for several miles, skirted with timber and well watered. This region appears to be well adapted to raising wheat, corn, and possibly cotton; also apples, peaches, &c. I have seen wild sheep here—they are active, of a large size, and almost fly from hill to hill. Antelopes and mustangs are numerous. I have stood upon the mountains between the Rio Puerco and the sources of the Brazos, Colorado and Red River, and looked down upon level bottoms of prickly pear, between twenty and thirty feet high, so thick as to be impenetrable: and, beside them, rich level prairie of several thousand acres, and groves of oak timber with fine water. This region is not so fertile as the interior of Texas, or the plains of Illinois and Missouri, but it is superior to New England and most of the Atlantic States. It is well adapted for the rearing of sheep. The valleys are capable of profitable cultivation, and the hills will sustain innumerable flocks. There is good water power on all the streams. Future researches will probably discover mines of silver and iron ore. The trade of Santa Fé should be diverted; this is its natural outlet."

At the Rio Grande terminates the south-western boundary of Texas, as defined by Act of Congress and claimed by the Republic. The valley of the Rio Grande, above the confluence of the river with the Puerco, contains a considerable population, concentrated chiefly in the towns and villages on the banks of the river. Beyond the margin of the Rio

Grande, and south-west and west of Monclova, the country is very mountainous and generally destitute of timber. Water is scarce, and the soil is quite barren, unless in vallies susceptible of irrigation. Sheep and goats pick up a scanty pasturage in the mountains. Very good wheat is raised at San Fernando, Santa Rosa, Monclova, Saltillo, Parras, and in their vicinities; but no description of agriculture can be deemed profitable in these districts without the aid of irrigation.

As no topographical account of the tract of country, extending around the head waters of the Red River, between the territory of the United States and Santa Fé has yet appeared, I am glad to be enabled to publish an original Survey and Field Notes drawn up for the use of the New Arkansas and Texas Land Company, claiming under contract entered into in 1832, between the State of Coahuila and Texas, on the one part, and John Charles Beales, M.D., and Jose Manuel Roynella, on the other. By the publication of these documents, I shall have completed a general sketch of the soil throughout the habitable limits of the Republic. The survey, it will be seen, was a task of peril and difficulty, the section explored being destitute of fixed inhabitants and frequented only by tribes of predatory Indians. The surveyor, who was an American, notices a rencounter with the savages with a coolness worthy of a practised "frontier-man."

COPY OF FIELD NOTES AND JOURNAL OF SURVEY.

June 27th.—Having, by a variety of observations, ascertained the intersection of the 32° of north latitude with the 102 of west longitude from Greenwich, we this day established our commencement corner at the point of intersection, by erecting a considerable pile of loose rock, in the centre of which we planted a stake of hackberry, ten feet long, marked [S.E. C.], meaning south-east corner. We made our corner in a clear open prairie, near a fine spring of freestone water, and due S. about twenty miles from the Red River of Texas. The land here is fertile, and clothed with the finest pasture,—a species of grass called by the Mexicans "gama." Buffaloes and antelopes in great abundance.

June 28th.—To-day we made sixteen miles north, over fertile prairie land, and encamped at night on the north bank of the Red River of Texas, finding our commencement corner to be four miles *less* distant from this river than we yesterday supposed it to be. The "bottom" of Red River at this place is nearly a mile in width, and formed of the richest loam, timbered with cotton-wood, buckeye, and spice-wood. Killed one buffalo and two antelopes.

June 29th.—This day we made seventeen miles N., over good prairie land, interspersed with occasional groves of oak timber. We passed two creeks, or rather sandy drains, at present totally dry. Saw large gangs of buffaloes and wild horses. Killed, of the first, two; and encamped at a pond of miserably bad water.

June 30th.—Made six miles N., over level prairie land, to the south fork of Red River. The bottom lands of this river are not very good. The water-course at this place is not more than forty-five yards in breadth, and extremely red, approaching almost to the consistency of mud. We

here found no other timber than cotton-wood. Passed the river, and continued our course further seven miles N., and encamped for the night on an inconsiderable stream of tolerable water. Killed three buffaloes.

July 1st.—Made four miles N., over broken and rugged barrens, and established the N.E. corner of section S., and S.E. corner of section 4; after which, made ten miles N., over land of the same character as that passed in the earlier part of the day. We saw immense herds of buffalo off to the north. Killed one. Encamped again on the south fork of Red River.

July 2d.—We this day made nineteen miles W., over high, open, though fertile, prairie, possessing excellent pasture; and encamped for the night at a hole of water that had barely a sufficiency for the occasion. This night one of our horses died, from the sting of a rattlesnake.

July 3d.—Made to-day fourteen miles W., over delightful prairie. In the afternoon we passed an extraordinarily large spring of water, and encamped at night without either water or wood. Killed two deer, and abandoned of the prairie one of our horses that had given up on the march.

July 4th.—We ran off ten miles W., over land similar to that passed yesterday, and encamped about two o'clock on a beautiful clear stream of water, with rich bottom-land and plenty of timber. Course of the stream S.E. Here concluded to remain for the balance of the day, in order to celebrate, as we best could, the anniversary of our National Independence. Hunters started forth in every direction, and at supper, though we were entirely destitute of the luxuries of civilized life, we feasted most sumptuously on buffalo, venison, antelope, and wild turkey.

July 5th.—Having set out early this morning, we made ten miles W., between sections 1 and 2, over an extremely broken and rugged country. During the day we saw large gangs of buffalo and some antelope. We encamped for the night on a low piece of marshy ground, that offered a bare sufficiency of water for our purposes.

July 6th.—W., between sections 1 and 2, seventeen miles.

Part of the distance very broken; the residue level rich prairie, occasionally timbered with oak and hackberry. In the evening the hunters brought to the camp one buffalo. We this night encamped at a spring of freestone water, in a small grove of timber.

July 7th.—Made nineteen miles W., over much such land as yesterday, and encamped for the night at a small pool of miserable water. Here we established the corner of sections 1, 2, 3, and 4.

July 8th.—We this morning proceeded S., to ascertain the corners of sections 1 and 2; and on the fifth day arrived at the supposed corner, which we established; and, returning on the same line, made fifteen miles N., between sections 1 and 2, over prairie somewhat broken, but rich and fertile. The hunters killed two buffaloes.

July 14th.—This day we remained in camp, for the purpose of killing and curing meat.

July 15th.—We remained in camp until nine or ten o'clock this morning, and afterwards made nine or ten miles N., over smooth prairie, without seeing water during the day. Encamped without wood or water.

July 16th.—We made an early start, in order to reach Red River. At the distance of seven miles we crossed a small stream running N.E., with some timber, such as cotton-wood and willow. In twelve miles more we reached the bottom of Red River of Texas,—extensive and rich timber—oak, hackberry, &c.; undergrowth, plum, cherry, and currant bushes, with much grape-vine. The river here is about fifty yards in width, and at this time about three feet in depth. Encamped on the south bank for the night.

July 17th.—This morning, early, we forded the river, and left the large timber. At the distance of half a mile, we entered a thicket of plum, haw and oak-bushes, which continued the distance of two miles. We then pursued our course north, over rich and rolling prairie, eight miles, to the corner of section 1, 2, 3, and 4. Encamped at a hole of water in the prairie.

July 18th.—Proceeded N., between sections 3 and 4,

sixteen miles, over level prairie, passing during the day many ponds of bad water. During this day's march one of our horses took fright, and burst two kegs of powder. Encamped for the night on a beautiful fork of Red River, running S.E.

July 19*th*.—Left the creek at an early hour, and ran seventeen miles N., over much such land as yesterday, and encamped in a small grove of timber without water.

July 20*th*.—We this morning, at the distance of four miles, reached the south fork of Red River. The stream at this place is about forty-five yards in breadth, and about three feet deep, with a wide and rich bottom. A variety of large and excellent timber. We this day made seventeen miles to the corner of sections 3, 4, 5, and 6, over very good land, and encamped on a small stream, about half a mile distant, E. of this corner.

July 21*st*.—E., between sections 4 and 5, at the distance of half a mile, crossed a small stream running S.E. Made eleven miles E., over land somewhat broken, but unusually rich, and encamped at a very large spring in a grove of timber. This day killed four buffaloes. Game plenty.

July 22*d*.—Made nineteen miles E., over same quality of land as that surveyed yesterday, and encamped on a branch of the south fork. Bottom wide and rich, with plenty of timber, viz. cotton-wood.

July 23*d*.—Started early, and made seventeen miles, through a country generally, though lightly, timbered, without undergrowth; and encamped on a creek about the size of that passed yesterday. Killed two buffaloes.

July 24*th*.—Reached, about ten o'clock this day, a small quantity of cotton-wood on a dry creek. Made eighteen miles E., over tolerable land, and encamped on Main Red River. Here we found the river near a hundred yards wide. Stream bold and muddy, with very rich bottom, plentifully timbered, cotton-wood, hackberry, and black locust. Here we encamped. Killed one buffalo.

July 25*th*.—Made twenty miles E., over a most delightful country, both prairie and timber-land. At the distance of twelve miles, crossed a stream running south, about six

yards wide. At the further distance of four miles, crossed another stream about the same size, and encamped on another, larger, at the distance of four miles more.

July 26th.—Made fifteen miles E. Character of this country similar to that passed yesterday. Killed two buffaloes and one deer. Here we established the east corner of sections 4 and 5.

July 27th.—We started S., to ascertain the corner of sections 1 and 4, at which point we arrived on the fifth day, after having lain by during the time one day and a half to cure meat. In consequence of some of our horses escaping from the guard, we were detained until a late hour, and made but nine miles.

Aug. 1st.—N., over rich and fertile land, generally timbered; encamped on a small stream running east.

Aug. 2d.—We to-day made fifteen miles N. to the main branch of Red River. Here we found the river from fifty to sixty yards wide, with a rich and extensive bottom, timbered with oak, hackberry, &c. Undergrowth, plum-bushes and grape-vines. One of the hunters killed a white bear of a large size.

Aug. 3d.—To-day we made seventeen miles N., over a gently rolling prairie of a good quality, with fine pasturage. Large gangs of buffalo seen to the west during the day. At the distance of eight miles we crossed a stream of fine water, from eight to ten yards wide, running from S. to E. We encamped at a pool of water in the prairie.

Aug. 4th.—To-day we made nine miles N., to the corner of sections 4 and 5. We passed over land of an unusually good quality. Saw immense herds of buffalo during the day.

Aug. 5th.—N., along the E, side of section 5. To-day we made seventeen miles N., over land of a good quality, generally lightly timbered. We encamped on a branch of the False Washita, at the distance of two miles from the corner of sections 4 and 5. We passed the False Washita, a deep and bold stream, with good "bottom" land. Timber, white oak, &c.

Aug. 6th.—N., along the E. side of section 5. To-day

we made eighteen miles, over level and rich prairie, We encamped without water. No sign of timber during the day. We passed some pools of miserable water, much frequented by buffalo.

Aug. 7th.—N., along the E. side of section 5. We to-day made fifteen miles to the corner of sections 5 and 8. Here we established the corner to sections 5 and 8, and encamped on a stream of fine water running E. The land we passed to-day was generally prairie of a good quality. Two buffaloes killed.

Aug. 8th.—W, between sections 5 and 8. We made fifteen miles. Land of a good quality, generally creek bottom. We encamped on a creek of fine water running E. Here we found game in great abundance. One of the hunters killed a very large white bear and two buffaloes.

Aug. 9th.—W. between sections 5 and 8. We made to-day twenty miles over land of a good quality, but broken; well timbered with oak and hackberry, &c. We encamped on a small branch running S. Game very plentiful.

Aug. 10th.—W. between sections 5 and 8. We to-day made eighteen miles over a broken country—land generally good. We passed during the day some small streams running S. We encamped on a small stream about five or six yards wide, running S. To-day five buffaloes killed.

Aug. 11th.—W. twenty-one miles between sections 5 and 8. At the distance of five miles we entered a beautiful prairie gently rolling, and of a superior quality of soil. Here buffaloes exist in almost incredible numbers. Encamped at a large lake or pond of water. During the night one of our horses died.

Aug. 12th.—W. seventeen miles over much such land as that passed yesterday. We encamped on a creek eight or ten yards across, with a rich bottom, with some cotton-wood timber on it; its course was S. E.

Aug. 13th.—W. nine miles to the corner of sections 5, 6, 7, and 8. The land we passed to-day was generally prairie. Here we encamped at a small creek. Game in abundance.

Aug. 14*th.*—To-day we fell in with a party of Riana Indians, who informed us they were on their way to Santa Fé, for the purpose of treating with the Government. We sent a copy of our journal up to this day.

Aug. 15*th.*—S. between sections 5 and 6 to the corner of sections 3, 4, 5, and 6. We reached it on the third day without difficulty.

Aug. 19*th.*—N. between 5 and 6, at the distance of three miles, we crossed a small creek running S. E.; and again, at a distance of fifteen miles, we crossed another of a larger size running S. E. We made twenty-five miles to-day, and encamped in a prairie without wood or water.

Aug. 20*th.*—We this day, as we were about to leave camp, met with a Comanche Indian, who informed us they were encamped on a small creek to the N. We proceeded N. about two miles. Here we met with a large party who appeared to be quite friendly. We immediately commenced trading with them; we purchased one hundred and ninety-one excellent beaver skins, and could have made more purchases, but thought it advisable to retain some of our goods for other Indians, with whom we might fall in. The chief of this party was called "Cordero." We also purchased five horses that we much needed.

Aug. 21*st.*—N. between sections 5 and 6. We made seventeen miles over broken land, thinly timbered with cedar and pine. We encamped on a small ravine making from the mountains. Two of the mountain deer killed to-day.

Aug. 22*d.*—N. between sections 5 and 6. We made to-day eighteen miles to the corner of sections 5, 6, 7, and 8, where we encamped for the night. No game killed to-day. The ground we passed over broken and poor.

Aug. 23*d.*—N. between sections 7 and 8, at the distance of half a mile, we crossed a small creek running N. E.; and at six miles we crossed another of a larger size running S. E. The land we passed to-day is broken and thin soil. We made sixteen miles and encamped by the side of a deep ravine, with a small quantity of bad water in it.

Aug. 24*th*.—N. between sections 7 and 8. To-day we made fifteen miles over much such land as yesterday, and encamped on the S. fork of the Canadian; it is a deep and bold stream, with a wide bottom of good land. Timber—hackberry, cotton-wood: undergrowth, rough plum bushes, and grape vines; here we gathered some plums of a large size and delicious flavour.

Aug. 25*th*.—N. between sections 7 and 8. We made nineteen miles over uneven ground; thin soil to corner of sections 7 and 9. We encamped at the corner of said sections on a small creek running E. No game killed to-day.

Aug. 26*th*.—E. between sections 8 and 9 to the corner of said sections; on the fifth day we arrived at the supposed corner. On the 28th, one of the men was bitten by a rattle snake, but fortunately relief was found instantly.

Aug. 30*th*.—S. along the E. side of section 8 to the corner 5 and 8. On the 1st of September (2nd Sept.) or 31st of August, we killed two buffaloes, and, in the evening, we abandoned one of our horses which had given up.

Sep. 1*st*.—N. along the E. side of section 8. To-day we made twenty-three miles over a rich tract. Country partly timbered with hackberry, oak, &c. Here we found game in great abundance. We encamped on the Canadian for the night. It is a large and bold stream, fifty or sixty yards wide, with a rich and extensive bottom, well timbered with hackberry, oak, &c.

Sep. 2*d*.—N. along the E. side of section 8. We made twenty-seven miles to the corner of sections 8 and 9. The ground we passed to-day is very generally prairie, of a good quality. We encamped near a piece of low marshy land, which afforded sufficiency of water for the night. One buffalo killed to-day.

Sep. 3*d*.—W. between sections 8 and 9. To day we made seventeen miles over level rich prairie, and encamped without water in a prairie. Our horses very much fatigued. The hunters killed two buffaloes.

Sep. 4*th*.—W. between sections 8 and 9, at the distance of about six miles, we crossed a branch of the Canadian

running S. E. with a bottom of good land, from fifty to one hundred yards wide. The land we passed over was generally prairie, of a good quality. We made twenty-three miles and encamped on a small stream running S. E.

Sep. 5th.—W. between sections 8 and 9, over prairie country of a good quality, and encamped at night on the Dry Fork,—a stream with but little water, and deep and rugged banks.

Sep. 6th.—W. to-day we made twenty miles over a rich level prairie. We encamped at night near a large spring in the prairie. Game in great abundance. Five buffaloes killed to-day.

Sep. 7th.—W. between sections 8 and 9. To-day we made sixteen miles to the corner of Sections 7, 8, 9, and 10, where we encamped for the night—land such as yesterday.

Sep. 8th.—N. between sections 9 and 10. We made sixteen miles through an uneven prairie of thin soil. We encamped without water. Game scarce.

Sep. 9th.—N. between sections 9 and 10. To-day we made twelve miles over a prairie; at a distance of five miles, we crossed the Dry Fork and encamped at a small hole of water in the prairie.

Sep. 10th.—N. between sections 9 and 10. To-day we made twenty miles over a level plain of valuable land. On this night, five of our party deserted, viz. Kimble, Bois, Caseboth, Boring, and Ryou, taking with them all our horses excepting four. This measure was adopted no doubt to prevent pursuit. We have suffered much for the want of food; we encamped this night on an extensive prairie without water.

Sep. 11th.—We this morning, for the want of water and horses, were unable to convey our baggage; we therefore scattered all our purchases, as well as the residue of our goods, over the prairie. We proceeded N. to the corner of sections on the bank of a ravine. Thence E. between sections 9 and 12, over a level plain twenty-two miles, and encamped at a large spring in the prairie.

Sep. 12th.—E. between sections 9 and 12. To-day we

made twenty-three miles over a level prairie of a good quality, and encamped on a small branch of fine water running N. E. Here one of the hunters killed two buffaloes.

Sep. 13*th*.—E. between sections 9 and 12. We to-day made twenty-one miles, and encamped in the prairie at a small pond of water, which had been much used by buffaloes. The prairie is level and of a good quality.

Sep. 14*th*.—E. between sections 9 and 12. We made fourteen miles over such land as yesterday. During the day we saw large groves of timber to the N. We encamped for the night on a stream of clear water with little or no timber. Two buffaloes killed. Large gangs of wild horses and buffaloes passed to-day.

Sep. 15*th*.—E. between sections 9 and 12. We to-day made twenty miles to the corner of sections 9 and 12, when we encamped on a small branch running N. E. During the day we saw immense herds of buffaloes and some deer. Land, prairie of good quality.

Sep. 16*th*.—N. along the E. boundary of section 12. At three miles we crossed a small branch running N. E.; and at four miles more we crossed the north fork of the Canadian. Here it is a large bold stream from fifty to sixty feet wide, with a large and extensive bottom, well-timbered with oak and hackberry: undergrowth, plum bushes, and grape vines. The country we passed over was of a good quality; generally timbered. Game plenty. We made twenty miles.

Sep. 17*th*.—N. along the E. side of section 12. To-day we made twenty-five miles, to the supposed corner of section 12, and the N. E. boundary of the grant. We encamped on a small creek running S. E.

Sep. 18*th*.—We proceeded N. to ascertain the true distance to the Arkansas river. Here we found it to be fifty-five miles north of the supposed. The river here is upwards of half a mile wide, with a large bottom and well-timbered with oak, hackberry, and elm; undergrowth, grape vines, &c. On the 19th, the hunters killed a buffalo.

Sep. 22*d*.—We returned to the N. E. corner of the

grant, and established about half in distance N. of the temporary corner before established. On the 21st we saw a large party of Indians to the W. The country between this corner and the Arkansas River is generally good. On the 24th our horses strayed, or were driven away by Indians, and were gone two days.

Sep. 27th.—W. along the N. boundaries of section 12. This time we ran on a supposed parallel line with the Arkansas River—say W. 10° N. We this day made twenty miles over land of a superior quality; a part of the way well timbered. We encamped on a small creek running S. E. About midnight we were attacked by a party of Snake Indians; we all prepared for battle and made a manful resistance. The action lasted but a few minutes, when the enemy fled, leaving on the ground nine of their party dead. We have to regret the loss of three men killed and one slightly wounded. The men killed—Mc Crummins, Weathers, and Jones; Thompson slightly wounded.

Sep. 28th.—We were occupied this day in burying our deceased friends, which we did with as much decency as our situation would admit of. We encamped on the field of action at night.

Sep. 29th.—W. 10° N. along the side of section 12. We this day made twenty-four miles over good land and well situated; mostly prairie. We encamped on a small stream of fine water running S.E.; some of the hunters killed four buffaloes and one deer.

Sep. 30th.—W. 10° N. along the N. side of section 12. To-day we made twenty-six miles over a level and rich prairie. We passed some ponds of stagnant water, but encamped all night, after running until a late hour, without any. Two buffaloes killed.

Oct. 1st.—W. 10° N., along the N. side of section 12. We to-day made twenty-one miles. At four miles we crossed a creek ten or fifteen yards wide, running S.E., with a good bottom of land, timbered with oak, hackberry, and cotton-wood. At the distance of four miles we passed the creek, running N.E. The land that we passed over

was generally good. We encamped on a branch running N.E.

Oct. 2d.—W. 10° N., along the N. boundary of section 12. We to-day made nine miles, and established the corner to sections 11 and 12. Land very generally good. A large proportion of it timbered with oak and hackberry.

Oct. 3d.—W. 10° N., along the N. boundary of section 11. At the distance of twelve miles crossed a branch running N.E. We this day made twenty miles, over good land, well timbered, and encamped on a small branch running N.E. Killed two buffaloes and three deer.

Oct. 4th.—W. 10° N., along the N. boundary of section 11. Made twenty-two miles, and encamped on a small branch running N.E. The land to-day was similar to that passed yesterday. Killed one antelope and one deer.

Oct. 5th.—W. 10° N., along the N. boundary of section 11. Made twenty-one miles, and encamped on a creek running N.E. The land now, as we approach the mountain, extremely broken.

Oct. 6th.—W. 10° N., on N. boundary of section 11. Made sixteen miles, over very broken and rugged land, thickly timbered with pine and cedar, to the base of the mountain, and the extreme head of a small creek running N.E. To-night there was a fall of snow of eight inches in depth.

Oct. 7th.—This day we devoted to a partial examination of the mountain. We found the difficulty in continuing our survey further W. such as to induce us to abandon the attempt. The men here discovered some ore, which, from its appearance, we thought worthy of saving for examination hereafter. In consequence of the lateness of the season, and our total inability to finish the whole of our survey before winter, I thought it best to pursue the most speedy plan for arriving in front of the "Sierra Obscura," in order to give it that examination required in my letter of instructions.

Oct. 8th.—Commenced retracing our steps to the N. corner of sections 11 and 12; at which point we arrived on the fourth day in the evening.

Oct. 13*th*.—S. between sections 11 and 12. Made twenty-six miles, over very rich and level prairie, to the Moro River. This river is very abundant and deep, though not wide, and certainly runs through the best country contained in the grant. The timber is abundant, and the bottom of the river, though nearly three miles in width, uniformly very rich. Killed four buffaloes. We encamped on the river for the night.

Oct. 14*th*.—S. between sections 11 and 12. Made twenty miles, over delightful prairie, occasionally shaded with groves of timber, to the bank of a small river, where we remained for the night.

Oct. 15*th*.—S. between same sections, seven miles, to the corner of sections 9, 10, 11, and 12; thence W., six miles, to the same creek we encamped on last night. The whole of this day's march was over good and broken land.

Oct. 16*th*.—W. between 10 and 11, twenty-five miles, over very broken country, and encamped on the extreme head of the Dry Fork. Killed two buffaloes and one elk.

Oct. 17*th*.—W., between sections 10 and 11, twenty-one miles to the base of the mountain, where we arrived extremely late, in consequence of the inequality of the ground.

Oct. 18*th*.—Retraced our steps along our last course to the corner of sections 9, 10, 11, and 12, where we arrived the third day, early in the afternoon.

Oct. 21*st*.—S. between sections 9 and 10, to the corner of sections 7, 8, 9, and 10, where we arrived the second day, and encamped in a small creek immediately in a corner, running E.

Oct. 23*d*.—W. between sections 7 and 10. Made eleven miles, over very broken and sterile land, to the base of Sierra Obscura. Here we remained until the 25th of the month, to give such examination of the mountain as the prevalence of snow would permit. The character of the mountain appears to be extremely sterile, being composed, where it was observable, of black rock and sand. It affords but little timber, and that of a stunted growth. Within about four miles of where we struck this mountain, we

found the remains of five old furnaces. This mountain is entirely separated from the principal one, and only connected with the Sierra del Sacramento by a low chain. It is much higher than any of its neighbours.

Oct. 25th.—Believing that any further examination of Sierra Obscura, at this season, and under present circumstances, would be fruitless, we returned this day to the corners of sections 7, 8, 9, and 10, and encamped on the same spot on which we encamped on the 22d.

Oct. 26th.—S. between 7 and 8, to the corners of 5, 6, 7, and 8, where we arrived on the third day.

Oct. 29th.—W. between 6 and 7, fifteen miles, over broken land, to the base of Sierra Obscura. Here we arrived sufficiently early to observe that the mountain here was pretty much of the same character as where we last touched it, with the exception that it was materially lower. Killed three deer and one elk.

Oct. 30th.—This morning, the men, having become extremely impatient, in consequence of the lateness and rigour of the season, made a formal demand of me of their pay, and refused positively to serve any longer unless their demands were discharged. I knew it was fruitless to oppose to their determination any objection whatever, and consequently determined on going to Santa Fé to report progress.*

(Signed) A. LE GRAND.

* The following were the specified limits of the grant to which the Survey refers:—" It shall begin at a landmark which shall be set up on the spot where the parallel of the thirty-second degree of north latitude crosses the meridian of the hundred and second degree of longitude west from London, said spot being at the south-west corner of the grant petitioned for by Colonel Reuben Ross. From thence it shall proceed west along the parallel of the thirty-second degree of latitude as far as the eastern limit of New Mexico. From thence it shall ascend to the north on the boundary-line between the provinces of Coahuila and Texas, and New Mexico, as far as twenty leagues south of the River Arkansas. From thence it shall run east to the meridian of the hundred and second

Two Franciscan friars, Dominguez and Escalante, proceeded from Santa Fé in 1776, with the intention of journeying to Monterey, in Upper California. According to the journal of their route, they advanced as far as 41° N.; but, estimating their distance westward of Santa Fé at 136 leagues, and considering themselves still very remote from Monterey, they retraced their course. These missionary travellers represented the borders of the rivers Gila and the Western Colorado as thickly inhabited by peaceable Indians in the lowest grade of civilization.

Taos, about one hundred miles above the town of Santa Fé, is the extreme point of Mexican population, in a westerly direction. Southward of this place, lies the valley of the Rio Grande, extending, between mountain-ranges, to its source in the Sierra Verde, the point of separation between the streams that flow into the Gulf of Mexico and those which fall into the Southern Ocean. Northward of Taos, sweep the treeless plains and sandy wastes, which girdle, like a sea, the granitic bases of the Rocky Mountains,—a land where no man permanently abides, not even the savage hunter, nor the animals, in the chase of which he employs the time that is unoccupied by acts of rapine or revenge.

The preceding Journal completes a sketch of the topography of Texas more accurate and ample than any heretofore published. Be its errors few or many, I cannot charge myself with lack of earnest-

degree of longitude, which is the western boundary of the grant petitioned for by the said Colonel Reuben Ross. And from thence it shall proceed south as far as the place of beginning."

ness in comparing authorities and endeavouring to arrive at unvarnished facts. At a time when the spirit of emigration pervades all classes of my countrymen, I have deemed myself bound to be doubly guarded against the exaggerated praise of a new country, lest in indulging, or borrowing, a flight of fancy, I might lure ill-rewarded industry from its home, to endure the bitterness of disappointment on an alien soil. A word or two now, respecting the choice of a settlement in a country which possesses immense tracts both of woodland and prairie.

In the selection of land, settlers will always be more or less influenced by the habits and associations of the country they have left; therefore emigrants from a low-lying district are likely to prefer the level region of Texas, while those who have from infancy breathed the mountain air will direct their steps towards the highlands. For a similar reason, some will prefer a wooded section and others an open or lightly-timbered prairie. For the emigrant of small capital, or the European settler unused to a warm climate and the laborious process of "clearing" forest-land, the upland prairie, backed by a timbered and perennial water-course, offers by far the most eligible "location."

To hew out a farm from the heart of the primeval forest is a ponderous and life-consuming task, even for the American back-woodsman, accustomed to wield the axe from boyhood, and to trust for subsistence to the unerring rifle. Alas! for the European, if above the condition of a daily labourer, who is constrained to engage in the unwonted and depressing toil! Year may follow year, and find him

struggling with difficulties which he is destined never to overcome. By dint of the severest and most irksome drudgery, he is enabled to reclaim a mere patch from the wilderness, and that overspread with unsightly stumps, and encircled by burned and blackened trees. In this disheartening pursuit he wastes the flower of his manhood. If the same process be performed on an extensive scale, by the aid of hired labour, the expense of clearing frequently exceeds the value of the land when cleared. To all these drawbacks must be added the diseases incidental to a residence amidst the shades of the newly opened forest, where the vegetable accumulations of ages are suddenly exposed to the beams of a scorching sun, and where heaps of levelled timber are left to rot upon the ground. There, the atmosphere is inevitably tainted with noxious exhalations, which soon blanch the ruddiest cheek and palsy the most vigorous arm.

On the prairies, Nature has prepared the soil for the husbandman, who has only to enclose his farm and insert the plough-share, which there encounters no obstacle. The labour of cultivation is consequently easy. A heavy plough and a strong team are required the first year, to break up the tough sward and turn over the soil. The Indian corn is dropped in the furrows and covered with a hoe, which, with an occasional light ploughing to clear away the weeds, is the only labour bestowed upon it, until it is fit to gather. It must be understood, however, that the crop raised in this manner will not reach an average quantity, although it arrives very opportunely to meet the necessities of the settler. By

turning the grass down, exposing the roots to the sun, and leaving the soil undisturbed, the sward becomes mellowed in a single season, and, while undergoing the process of decomposition, affords nourishment to the growing corn. In the ensuing spring the roots of the wild grass are completely rotted, and the plough passes through a rich light mould fit for all the purposes of husbandry. The ordinary operations of farming may now be conducted in the usual way, and the labour of cultivating a light soil, unincumbered with rocks or stumps, is so trifling that the farmer has sufficient time to improve his land and buildings. On a level plain of rich mould, the plough may be managed by a stripling; on newly cleared timber-lands, it requires strength and skill, the share must be sharpened frequently, and is often broken, and, at the best, the work advances slowly. The superior facility of working open land, the saving in the wear of farming implements, the economy of time, and, of course, the greater degree of certainty in the farmer's calculations, with the comparative exemption from local disease, give a pre-eminence to the prairie over the timbered land not to be materially reduced by any inconvenience that may be occasioned by an inadequate supply of wood. It would be sounder economy for a farmer to settle in the midst of a prairie and draw his fuel and fence-wood five miles, than to undertake the clearing of a farm in the forest. According to an experienced American authority, the agriculturists of Illinois have become aware of the fact, and there have been numerous instances of farmers in that rich and improving state, who, having purchased a small piece

of woodland for its timber, have selected their farms at a distance, on the prairie. Supposing the soil of both to be of equal quality, a labourer can cultivate two-thirds more of prairie than of timbered land; the returns are larger, and the capital to be invested less. The soil of the rolling prairies of Texas is a deep black loam mixed with sand in various proportions—not certainly so rich as the timbered alluvions of the Brazos, which have a soil formed by the decomposition of vegetable matter to the depth of more than ten feet—but valuable for all the purposes of agriculture, as well as for grazing. With wood, water, a boundless range for stock of all descriptions, a propitious climate and fertile plains, free from the obstruction of timber or stone, what can the husbandman desire more? Nature has lavished her bounties with the munificence of an indulgent parent; it only remains for man to show himself worthy of her favours, by the due application of his energies, mental and corporeal, and the temperate use of the means of enjoyment placed at his disposal. For a sensual, indolent, uninquiring race, the bowers of a second Eden would bloom in vain.

TEXAS:

THE

RISE, PROGRESS, AND PROSPECTS

OF THE

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS.

BOOK II.

THE HISTORY OF TEXAS, FROM THE PERIOD OF THE FIRST EUROPEAN SETTLEMENTS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPUBLIC.

"What have we ever known like the colonial vassalage of these States?—When did we or our ancestors feel, like them, the weight of a political despotism that presses men to the earth, or of that religious intolerance which would shut up heaven to all but the bigoted? WE HAVE SPRUNG FROM ANOTHER STOCK—WE BELONG TO ANOTHER RACE. We have known nothing—we have felt nothing—of the political despotism of Spain, nor of the heat of her fires of intolerance."

WEBSTER'S *Speech on the Panama Mission, delivered in the United States Congress, April* 14, 1826.

CHAPTER I.

Texas originally the resort of wandering Indian Tribes—First European Settlements—Conflicting Claims of France and Spain—Discoveries of de la Salle, and Fate of his Settlement at Matagorda—Failure of French Colonization in Louisiana—Expedition of Alonzo de Leon—Precautions of the Spanish Government for excluding Foreigners from Texas—Indian Troubles—Presidios and Missions—Rise of San Antonio de Behar, La Bahia, and Nacogdoches—Decline of the Settlements.

THE deadening effects of the barbarous policy adopted by Spain in the practical administration of the affairs of its American possessions, is strikingly exemplified in the history of Texas—a country still imperfectly known in the United States, and concerning which impressions the most vague and erroneous are entertained in Europe. Under a rational system of management, Texas, instead of being, until lately, almost a *Terra Incognita*, which even a European Spaniard was not permitted to explore without a passport from his government at home, would have been the flourishing seat of agriculture, commerce, and the arts—issuing and receiving, in ample measure, those products and commodities which are at once the signs and the auxiliaries of civilization. But the ignorant and anti-social despotism which exhausted the NEW WORLD and corrupted the OLD, shed its withering influence over Texas, and left the resources of its redundant soil to be developed by a people who, by

their superior aptitude for improvement, seem destined to sway the world.

Before the formation of European settlements in Texas, that country was the occasional resort, rather than the abode, of Indian tribes, who, subsisting chiefly by their skill in the chase, had no fixed habitations, nor possessed that real interest in the land which is derived from labour expended in its cultivation. Their lives were chiefly devoted to hunting and predatory warfare, like the modern Comanches; and, for all social purposes, they were very inferior to those inhabitants of the central provinces of Mexico who were subdued by Cortez. Both have been, and are, denominated "Indians;" but the tribes that roamed the wilds in search of subsistence were not far above the condition of the animals which formed their prey; whereas the inhabitants of central Mexico—the subjects and neighbours of Montezuma—had made considerable advances in the arts of civilized life,—had built flourishing and populous cities,—practised a useful, if imperfect, husbandry,—and associated themselves under a system of civil polity distinguished by gradations of rank, division of labour, and general contribution to the wants of the State. When, therefore, I have occasion to mention the existing races of Mexican Indians, it is necessary to bear in mind the different character and habits of those who live by hunting and those who live by agriculture, —much sentimental sympathy being wasted upon the former, which might, with advantage, be bestowed upon the latter.

The thriftless ambition of Spain led her to prefer

the nominal occupation of an immense expanse of territory to the establishment of compact colonies containing within themselves the elements of immediate prosperity and future greatness. Hence the obscurity that hangs over the history and topography of those Transatlantic provinces which lay remote from the seat of vice-regal government. Of the original settlement of Texas, the only information that has escaped from the public archives of Old and New Spain, is contained in a diplomatic correspondence on the question of the limits of Louisiana, preliminary to the acquisition of the Floridas by the United States.* The parties to this correspondence, which was commenced in 1805, and resumed in 1817, were Messrs. Pinckney and Munroe and Mr. John Quincy Adams, on behalf of the United States; and Don Pedro Cevallos and Don Louis de Onis, on behalf of Spain. The object of the American diplomatists was to show that, by the acquisition of Louisiana from France, in April, 1803, the United States became entitled to East and West Florida, with the country between the Mississippi and the Rio Grande, on the ground that these territories were included within the original boundaries of the purchased province.

M. Talleyrand, then Foreign Minister under Napoleon, to whom the point at issue was referred in a friendly way, for the purpose of obtaining the "good offices" of France for the United States in the negotiation with Spain, declared, in the name

* State Papers and Public Documents of the United States, including Confidential Documents, vol. xii. Third Edition. Published under the patronage of Congress. Boston, 1819.

of the Emperor, against the claims put forth by the government of the republic with respect to the Floridas—the more immediate object of desire—in a letter to Mr. Munroe, dated Paris, December 21, 1804:—

"France," says M. Talleyrand, "in giving up Louisiana to the United States, transferred to them all the right over that colony which she had acquired from Spain. She could not, nor did she wish to, cede any other; and that no room might be left for doubt in this respect, she repeated, in her treaty of April 30, 1803, the literal expressions of the Treaty of San Ildephonso, by which she acquired that colony two years before. Now, it was stipulated, in her treaty of the year 1801, that the acquisition of Louisiana by France was a *retrocession;* that is to say, that Spain restored to France what she had received of her in 1762:—the territory bounded on the east by the Mississippi—the river Iberville—the lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain."

After stating that France had no claim whatever to the Floridas, and that Spain had refused to cede any part of them to her when treating for the retrocession of Louisiana, M. Talleyrand, on behalf of his equitable and unambitious master, winds up with an edifying lecture on the aggressive dispositions manifested by the United States "to the injury of the lawful owner" of the Floridas, "a power which has long occupied, and still occupies, one of the first ranks in Europe."—This was written in December, 1804; in May, 1808, Bonaparte had seized upon the Spanish crown!

It is curious to remark the pertinacity with which the American negotiators urged their demands, notwithstanding the adverse testimony of the party whose amicable interference they had solicited; and not less worthy of note is the ill-disguised assumption of superiority in the representatives of a republic not half a century old over the ministers of an ancient and once potent monarchy.

It appears to me indubitable, that whatever territorial right may be vested in a nation by virtue of prior discovery, was possessed by Spain to the sovereignty of the countries bordering on the Gulf of Mexico. That right might be nullified by force, or its direct maintenance might be waived, from an apprehension of the results of hostile arbitrement, but its existence must, I conceive, be evident to every dispassionate inquirer who recurs to the exploring expeditions of the Spanish commanders, and the settlements made, early in the sixteenth century, in the north-western countries bordering on the Pacific Ocean. Lower California was discovered by Grijalva in 1534; and, in 1602, Viscayno, sailing northwards, discovered in Upper California the harbours of San Diego, Monterey, and San Francisco. Nearly one hundred and fifty years before the French had established a post on the Mississippi, Juan Ponce de Leon, Francisco de Garay, Hernando de Soto, and other military navigators, had explored the eastern coast of the Mexican Gulf, from Florida to Panuco. About the middle of the sixteenth century, mining operations had been commenced near Santa Fé, in New Mexico, and posts organised for opening trading communications with

the Indians. The "kingdoms" (as they have been pompously styled) of New Leon and New Santander were created in the year 1595, and the province of Coahuila, which, be it observed, embraced a considerable portion of territory east of the Rio Grande, in 1600. It does not appear, however, that any actual settlement was made by Spain in the country which in this work is designated Texas Proper, until the year 1690; and in this tardiness of actual occupation originated the pretensions of France to the Rio Grande, as the south-western frontier of Louisiana—pretensions subsequently revived by the shrewd and eager diplomatists of the United States, with a degree of boldness indicative of the consciousness, on their part, of the ability of the government they represented, to invigorate the intrinsic weakness of its claims, by the exercise of a dictatorial power.

In 1672, the French, who had been more than a century in Canada, had their curiosity awakened by Indian accounts of a river which, rising in the neighbourhood of the Great Lakes, flowed through magnificent forests towards the South. It was alleged that the forests bordering on this mighty river had never been trodden by the foot of the white man. In 1673, an adventurous party set out from Quebec to trace the course of this monarch among the North American waters, and descended the Mississippi (which they named the Colbert) to the mouth of the Arkansas, one of its tributaries. On their return to Quebec, the adventurers communicated the result of their expedition to Count Frontenac, governor of the colony; and to his successor, the Sieur de la Salle, who had resided many

years in Canada, a royal commission was given to explore the new regions.

In discharge of the duty thus devolved upon him, La Salle, accompanied by the Chevalier Tonti and Father Hennepin, a Récollet missionary, inured to the hardships of travelling in the wilderness, and possessed of considerable acquirements, journeyed, in 1679, from the north towards the south, and after surveying Lakes Erie, Ontario, Huron, and Michigan, advanced as far as the river Illinois, where he built Fort Crevecœur. He then divided his company, which consisted of thirty men, into two separate parties—one for ascending the Mississippi to its source, the other for examining that river in its descent. The first party was placed under the charge of Father Hennepin; the second was intrusted to M. Tonti, La Salle himself being obliged, in consequence of the loss of a boat with a valuable freight, to return to Fort Frontenac, in Canada, to provide fresh supplies. The Friar Hennepin, after proceeding higher than the falls of St. Anthony, was captured, but eventually released, by the Indians, and, returning to France, published an account of his travels, dedicated to the king, which awakened new interest in the countries he described.

In 1682, an expedition upon a larger scale was fitted out by La Salle, who, with sixty followers, descended the Mississippi, built Fort Prud'homme, at the mouth of the Wabash River, and continued his course until he reached the Gulf of Mexico. To the territories through which he passed he gave the name of Louisiana, in honour

of the reigning monarch of France, Louis XIV. Anxious to communicate in person his discoveries to his countrymen, La Salle, shortly after his return to Quebec, left Canada for his native land, where he was received with many marks of distinction. Having warmly urged upon a ruler with whom the desire of territorial aggrandizement was a master passion, the advantages to be derived by securing the sovereignty of the countries situated in the interior between the Northern Sea and the Mexican Gulf, his suggestions were adopted, and measures taken to carry them into effect. A treaty recently agreed upon between France and Spain afforded an opportunity considered favourable for the project. Accordingly, on the 24th of July, 1684, La Salle sailed from La Rochelle, with four vessels and two hundred and eighty persons (of whom one hundred were soldiers), and everything requisite for founding a settlement.

Deceived in the reckoning by the currents of the gulf, the expedition failed in reaching its destination—the mouths of the Mississippi, where it was intended to establish a colony. Having sailed unconsciously to the southward, one hundred and twenty leagues beyond the entrance of that river, La Salle landed, on the 18th of February, 1685, at the head of the Bay of San Bernardo—called also by the Spaniards Espiritu Santo, and identical with the Matagorda of the present day. Here he took formal possession of the country in the name of his sovereign, after the fashion of the times, built and garrisoned a small fort on the Guadalupe, and acquired some importance for the post of St. Louis.

The largest vessel of the expedition, a royal frigate of forty guns, with its commander, M. de Beaujeu, returned to France, two others were lost in the bay, and the fourth, a small sloop, had been captured off St. Domingo by Spanish cruisers. After several unsuccessful attempts to discover the Mississippi, La Salle, on the 12th of January, 1687, leaving at his fort twenty persons, including seven women, under the charge of a subordinate in command, departed, with sixteen others, for the purpose of travelling by land to the Illinois, and thence, through Canada, to France, where he hoped to obtain materials for a fresh expedition. On this journey he was assassinated by two of his own men, who feared to be made responsible for the consequences of some misconduct. Thus perished, on the 19th of March, 1687, Robert de la Salle, a man who, though sanguine and unscrupulous, was imbued with the genuine spirit of a discoverer. His brother and several others of the party succeeded in reaching the fort on the Illinois, which was still under the command of M. Tonti, who had returned from the entrance of the Mississippi, whither he had proceeded, according to arrangement, to meet the expedition under La Salle. A few feeble settlements were made by the French in different parts of the immense and undefined region then included under the name of Louisiana; but the outbreak of hostilities between France and Spain, in 1689, arrested all attempts at colonization until the restoration of peace in 1698.

In 1699, D'Iberville, a brave and intelligent adventurer, was despatched with an expedition to

the Mississippi, to found and govern a new French colony. He assumed nominal possession of the country, from the mouth of the Mobile River to the Bay of San Bernardo. The close relations which subsisted between France and Spain at the beginning of the eighteenth century, it is probable, induced the cabinet of Madrid to overlook these movements, which it always professed to regard as intrusive. The boundaries remained in the same unadjusted state as those between the territories of Great Britain and the United States, in the region westward of the Rocky Mountains, at the present day—the French, perhaps, trusting to obscure and doubtful limits as a cover for future encroachments, and the Spaniards choosing rather to postpone a settlement, than precipitate a struggle that might end in concessions subversive of the jealous barriers, which their policy had interposed between their more important colonial dependencies and the maritime powers of Europe.

Notwithstanding its prodigious natural resources, Louisiana (called by Father Hennepin "the delight of America")—in consequence of the mis-government by which, in a greater or less degree, all European colonies have been, in turn, afflicted,—proved not only a useless acquisition, but a depressing burthen to France. Crozat, a rich financier, obtained, by letters patent from Louis XIV., a grant of the colony, which, according to its conjectural limits, was several times more extensive than France, with a monopoly of the trade for twelve years. Dispirited by the large disbursements required at the commencement of the undertaking, Crozat surrendered

the grant in 1717, and it was transferred, by the Regent Orleans, to a trading association. Under the Mississippi company, in the year 1720, a serjeant and three men were stationed at La Salle's post on the Bay of San Bernardo, and, in August of the subsequent year, Bernard de la Harpe, on whom was conferred the empty title of commandant, proceeded, by order of the Chevalier Bienville, Commandant General of Louisiana, to the bay, with a detachment of twenty soldiers, and elevated there a new impression of the arms of France, intended to represent the continued assertion of the right of sovereignty. But no substantial footing was gained in Texas, the colonies elsewhere languished, or perished, and France, which had looked to them as the source of wealth and maritime greatness, became exhausted and wearied with the cost and trouble of their maintenance. Nor will such a result be deemed extraordinary, when the colonial policy of the "mother country" is fairly estimated. That policy was so short-sighted and selfish, that the planters of Louisiana, in addition to other oppressive and vexatious restrictions, were prohibited from raising their own corn! Instead, also, of bringing together a body of industrious agricultural settlers, the people thrust upon the fertile lands of Louisiana were, says Charlevoix, "miserable wretches, driven from France for real or supposed crimes, or bad conduct; or persons who had enlisted in the troops, or enrolled themselves as emigrants, in order to avoid the pursuit of their creditors." Both classes, of course, regarded the colony as a place of exile.

In 1762, under an article of the treaty of August,

1761, known by the title of the Family Compact, all that portion of Louisiana which was not included in the territory claimed by England by right of conquest, was ceded to Spain, whose boundaries west of the Mississippi consequently ceased to be a subject of controversy.* At the same period, Spain transferred Florida, with all her territory east and south-east of the Mississippi, to England, in exchange for Havannah, the key of Cuba, and the Mexican Gulf, which had been captured by the British during the previous war.

Having noticed the slight and fleeting relations of France to Texas, it is necessary to advert to the fate of the puny establishment formed by La Salle at the Bay of San Bernardo. According to Spanish authority, the fort of St. Louis was taken, and its occupants massacred, by the Indians; on the other hand, it is alleged, by the French, that the destruction of the little garrison was accomplished by the Spaniards themselves. One thing appears to be certain—that the nautical blunder which caused the adventurous but unfortunate La Salle to break ground in Texas, instead of occupying a position on the Mississippi, alarmed the Spaniards, and impelled them to the adoption of measures for asserting their supremacy on the soil. When the news of La Salle's invasion reached Mexico, the Viceroy,

* To understand the question long agitated between the United States and Spain, it is necessary to remember that Louisiana was dismembered by France in 1762-3; the portion east of the Mississippi, excepting the island of Orleans, being conveyed to England, and the remainder of the province to Spain: the section which was ceded to Great Britain includes what is now Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and West Florida.

the Marquis de Monclova, fearful of the recurrence of similar inroads, held a council of war, to deliberate on the affair, in obedience to a royal order issued by Philip II. enjoining the extermination of all foreigners who should dare to penetrate into the Gulf of Mexico. An expedition was resolved on, to be formed at "Cohaquila" (*Coahuila*, whose limits then extended to the River Medina), under the command of Captain Alonzo de Leon, governor of that province, to scour the country and "hunt out" the French, if any were still remaining. A suitable force was despatched accordingly, headed by this officer, who arrived on the 22nd of April, 1689, at the site of La Salle's fort, and, on the 24th, at the entrance of San Bernardo Bay, where the remains of one of the French vessels that had been wrecked on the coast were still visible.

In the course of his march, it was reported to De Leon that some of La Salle's companions were wandering about the country, or associated with the Indians. Prompted by this rumour, he visited an Indian tribe called the Asimais, or Asinaes, who received him with marks of respect and good will, but among whom he could obtain no traces or tidings of the fugitive Frenchmen. Obvious suggestions of policy induced the Spanish commander to reciprocate the kindness of the Asimais, on whom he bestowed the name of "*Texas*," since applied to the country they inhabited, (also called the New Philippines,) and which, in their language, signified "friends."* On the 22nd of May, in the same

* Texas and Texans are the correct English appellations of the land and its inhabitants ; in Spanish, *Tejas* and *Tejanos* (pro-

year, De Leon informed the Viceroy of Mexico of the freedom of the whole country from foreigners, mentioned emphatically the amicable dispositions of the Indians, and recommended the establishment of Missions and garrisons, for the purpose of *rationalizing* the natives and preventing the intrusion of Europeans. In accordance with the recommendation, the Mission of San Francisco de Texas was founded in 1690.

From this period, the Spanish government seems to have directed a vigilant eye towards the previously neglected province. More rigorous orders were issued for the exclusion of foreigners, and special directions were given for the control and instruction of the Indians. For the promotion of these objects, two expeditions were fitted out, one under Don Domingo de Teran, and another under Don Gregorio Salinas. Fresh discoveries were made by land and water, in obedience to a royal order promulgated by His Catholic Majesty, November 12th, 1692. About twenty-two years afterwards (the Duke de Linares being then Viceroy of Mexico) Louis St. Dennis and three other Frenchmen, bearing passports from the governor of Louisiana, under colour of buying cattle at the Spanish Missions of Texas, penetrated as far as the post of San Juan Baptista on the Rio Grande. Suspecting that the real objects of St. Dennis and his associates were political observation and contraband trade, the authorities seized and forwarded them to

nounced *Téhas* and *Téhanos*). Texian, Texasian, Texican, and Texasite, all of which have been used to designate the people of Texas, are more or less corrupt.

the city of Mexico, from which St. Dennis escaped, after a variety of adventures, to the French post at Natchitoches. The capture of these men was followed by another Mexican expedition into the province, of which a military officer of subaltern rank, Don Domingo Ramon, was nominated chief.

This expedition, according to Spanish accounts, was received with "inexpressible friendship" by the Indians, who, doubtless, had been conciliated by presents. In conformity with Indian fashion, the commander, Ramon, received the compliment of adoption, and was named chief of a tribe. The acceptance of these barbarian honours by the Spanish leader is obviously to be traced to the dread of French encroachment or intrigue. As a check upon the French settlement at Natchitoches, which the Spaniards affected to consider within their limits, and only existing by sufferance, Ramon founded, at a short distance from it, four military posts and four missions—San Francisco, La Purissima Conception, San Josef, and Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe. By a royal order in 1718, various alterations were made in the military administration of Texas; among other new arrangements, a detachment of fifty light infantry was stationed at San Antonio de Bexar. Ramon shortly afterwards died at the Presidio of San Juan Baptista, on the Rio Grande.

War having broken out between France and Spain, during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, the French at Natchitoches attacked the neighbouring Spanish Missions, and obliged the inhabitants to seek a temporary retreat at San Antonio de Bexar.

An offer of his purse and person, to dislodge the invaders, was made by the Marquis de Aguago to the Viceroy of New Spain, the Marquis de Valero, and by him accepted. Named by the Viceroy, Governor-general of the New Philippines, or Province of Texas, and New Estremadura, the noble volunteer raised a body of several hundred troops, with which he marched in 1719 into Texas, and advanced without opposition to the Spanish post of the Adaes, in the vicinity of Natchitoches, whither the French had thought proper to retire. The progress of hostilities was soon after suspended, in obedience to orders from Spain, the government of which had determined on keeping within its acknowledged bounds, and quietly increasing and strengthening its outposts.

In accordance with this determination, the Marquis de Aguago re-established the old and founded new Missions, taking fresh precautions for the security of the frontier. San Antonio de Bexar was erected into a *Presidio*, or permanent military station, on the 28th of November, 1730, and preparations were commenced for making a regular settlement under its protection. The governor-general petitioned the king for the introduction of four hundred emigrant families; two hundred to be selected from the Indians of the Mexican district of Tlaxcala, and the remainder to be taken from Gallicia in Spain, or from the Canary Islands. It was ordered by the king that the whole number prayed for should be furnished by the Canaries, but, for what reason does not appear, no more than sixteen families, consisting of fifty-seven persons of the different sexes,

arrived at San Antonio. It is recorded that the expense of transplanting this small number of emigrants amounted to 72,000 dollars, a fact which, if correct, stamps the transaction with the character of a job. To supply the deficiency of colonists, the prisons of New Spain were ransacked, and the choicest of their inmates culled, for the purpose of participating in the glory of founding a city in the wilderness. In this manner was peopled the village of San Fernando (afterwards San Antonio), close to the Presidio of Bexar, from whence several expeditions were despatched northwards, for the repression of Indian outrages, at the close of the year 1730.

A striking example of the stern tenacity with which Spain adhered to its theoretic right of territory, occurred in the year 1742. The French commandant of Natchitoches, being desirous, in consequence of injury sustained by inundation, to remove that post further from the bank of Red River, requested permission to do so of Don Manuel de Sandoval, commandant of the Spanish post of the Adaes. Sandoval acceded to the request; the desired site being distant not more than the range of a musket-shot from the old situation. Notwithstanding the seemingly unimportant character of the concession, and the considerations of humanity on which it was granted, it incurred the bitter censure of the Viceroy of Mexico, by whose orders Sandoval was superseded, and removed under military escort to the seat of government, where he was tried by a court-martial, and subjected to the execution of its sentence, with all the rigour of the law!

In 1758, the Indians, descending from their hunting grounds of the north, attacked the post of San Saba, and killed a number of soldiers, friars, and settlers—the memory of which event has been preserved in Mexican tradition. In consequence of their inroads, a body of troops, under the command of Don Diego Ortiz de Parilla, was despatched against the savages, and a resolution ultimately adopted by the Spanish government to organize an extensive and uniform line of posts, to cover all the interior provinces of Mexico. The cession of Louisiana by France to Spain, in the year 1762, left the latter full liberty to provide for the defence of the north-eastern frontier. Authority was given to the Marquis de Rubi to examine the state of the defences, and the result of this commission was, that on the 10th of September, 1772, a chain of posts had been established from the coast of Sonora, on the Pacific, to the Gulf of Mexico. So late as the year 1770, there had always been Spanish garrisons in the fort of the Adaes, near Natchitoches, and other frontier posts; but the cession of Louisiana to Spain caused the fort of the Adaes to be evacuated in 1773, it being no longer required for its original object.

During the war of American independence, Spain again obtained possession of the Floridas, and they were formally transferred to her by England at the peace of 1783. On the 1st of October, 1800, the treaty of San Ildephonso was concluded between France and Spain, by which, under certain conditions, the latter made a retrocession of Louisiana to France, with the same limits that it had when

ceded to Spain in 1762. Its previous change of ownership had added nothing to the importance or value of the colony, which Spain estimated chiefly because it served as a vast wilderness barrier between the rich provinces of Mexico and the United States. The proximity of the Anglo-Americans was indeed the peculiar dread of the Spaniards, who regarded the interposition of a French province as, comparatively, an advantage. It was but seldom that the settlers of British origin failed to girdle their boundaries with an intelligent, active, and extending population; whereas the French and Spaniards proved equally unsuccessful in creating prosperous and powerful communities on the American continent. The pursuit and the acquisition of the precious metals had turned the Spaniards aside from those industrious occupations, which are the only permanent sources of national opulence and power; and the pleasure-loving dispositions and social habits of the French tended to disgust them with the solitude of early settlements, which has in itself a singular charm for the free, hardy, and undaunted pioneers of Anglo-American colonization. It is only where they have called in the aid of slave-labour, as in Cuba and the West Indies, that the planters of France and Spain have become affluent by commerce. On the banks of the St. Lawrence and the table-lands of Mexico, the descendants of emigrants from those countries continue to display an anti-commercial and stationary character, strikingly at variance with the onward spirit of the people of British origin, by whom they have been neutralized or overawed. The French

and Spanish colonists suffered the debilitating effects of arbitrary government—the settlers of British origin were sustained and animated by the progressive character of their country's institutions.

It has been stated that, in providing for the exclusion of foreigners from Texas, the Spanish government united the ecclesiastical with the executive authority, and planted the soldier and the friar side by side, in the establishment of Presidios and Missions. To explain the nature of the administration that regulated the affairs of the province, it is necessary to give a brief description of these establishments, which were uniform in their machinery and objects throughout the Spanish colonies.

Each Presidio formed the head-quarters of a military district, and the troops detached to it were under the immediate authority of a commandant. The buildings generally consisted of a square, surrounded by a wall, within which were the residence of the commandant, accommodations for the troops, the church, and stores. Forts were occasionally erected in the neighbourhood of the Presidios. The garrisons were mostly an inferior description of troops—badly clothed and paid, idle and disorderly—the very refuse of the camp. Their principal occupation was chastising and recapturing the nominally converted Indians, under the direction of the friars. The number assigned to a Presidio was two hundred and fifty mounted men, but the muster-roll was very rarely complete.

The Missions varied according to extent, standing, and population, each being governed by one or more missionaries—all friars of the order of San

Francisco.* As the usages of Catholicism are little liable to change, I borrow the description of these establishments as they still exist in California.

To each Mission is allotted, in the first instance, a tract of choice land about fifteen miles square, which is appropriated to the general purposes of the establishment. The buildings vary according to locality and population, but, like the Presidios, they are generally in the form of a square, defended by a wall. The church was usually placed at one extremity of the square, and a fort at the other, the apartments of the fathers, their granaries and workshops, occupying the remainder. The Indian converts were distributed in huts, at a little distance from the principal edifices; there the unmarried of either sex, including both adults and children, were locked up at night, in separate buildings, by the friars, who kept the keys, and punished every breach of this regulation by severe whipping, inflicted in private on the females, and in public on the males. Thus posted at vantage, the ghostly fathers lured, terrified, or coerced the savage and superstitious natives to the profession of a ceremonial Christianity, for their own spiritual welfare, and to the practice of useful crafts and the cultivation of the soil, for the especial benefit of their reverend monitors and masters.

Deplorably abject was the submission exacted from these miserable proselytes. Under the tutelage of the Franciscans, they sank lower in the social scale than the West Indian negro. Converts in

* Forbes' History of Upper and Lower California.

name, they were slaves in reality—their thoughts, words, and actions being under the most searching inquisition and rigorous control. Although their supply of food was generally regular, and their labour light, their physical strength diminished, while their intellectual feebleness increased. The animal indulgences they received, were as fatal to their improvement as the loss of their mental independence. It has been justly observed by a well-informed writer, that the Spaniards have treated even the mild and partially-civilized Indians of Central Mexico as wild beasts, which their captors wished to tame, rather than as children, capable of being trained to the duties of a useful manhood.*

The dispassionate Humboldt characterises, in indignant terms, the system of missionary kidnapping which disgraced the American dependencies of Spain.

"By the laws, there can be no Indian slaves in the Spanish colonies, and yet, by a singular abuse, two species of wars, very different in appearance, gave rise to a state very much like that of the African slave. The missionary monks of South America make, from time to time, incursions into the countries possessed by peaceable tribes of Indians, whom they call savages (*Indios bravos*), because they have not learned to make the sign of the cross, like the equally naked Indians of the Missions (*Indios reducidos*). In these nocturnal incursions, dictated by the most culpable fanaticism, they lay hold of all whom they can surprise,

* Walton's Spanish Colonies.

especially children, women, and old men. They separate, without pity, children from their mothers, lest they should concert together the means of escape. The monk who is chief of this expedition distributes the young people among the Indians of his Mission who have the most contributed to the sweep of the *Entrados*. These prisoners bear the name of *Portos*, and they are treated like slaves till they are of an age to marry."

Accurate and impartial in his account of these anti-Christian practices, the Prussian philosopher erred in attributing them solely to fanatical impulses. Another and more vulgar motive exercised a not less powerful agency over their authors. The increase of converts which swelled the spiritual triumphs of the missionaries, was essential likewise to their temporal aggrandizement. The advantages to be derived from an augmentation of the flock produced indifference to the means by which that augmentation might be effected. Sometimes, the most favoured and trusted among the native proselytes were employed to decoy their unreclaimed brethren into the fold. When these and other contrivances failed, more stringent measures were adopted, the nature of which, in comparatively recent days, has been explained in the narrative of the voyages of Captain Beechey, who witnessed their operation during his visit to California in 1826.

"At a particular period of the year, when the Indians can be spared from the agricultural concerns of the establishment, many of them are permitted to take the launch of the Mission, and make

excursions to the Indian territory. On these occasions, the Fathers desire them to induce as many of their unconverted brethren as possible to accompany them to the Missions, of course implying that this is to be done by persuasion; but the boat being furnished with cannon and musketry, and in every respect equipped for war, it too often happens that the neophytes, and the *gente de razon** who superintend the direction of the boat, avail themselves of their superiority, with the desire of ingratiating themselves with their masters and obtaining a reward. There are, besides, repeated acts of aggression, which it is necessary to punish, all of which furnish proselytes. Women and children are generally the first objects of capture, as their husbands and parents sometimes voluntarily follow them into captivity." One of these expeditions, in 1826, terminated in a battle, in which thirty-four of the converted were killed, but the loss was subsequently compensated by a second expedition, which ended in the capture of forty women and children of the invaded and obdurate unbelievers. These were forthwith incorporated with the standing force of the Mission, and Christianized with nearly equal celerity, through the enforced repetition of certain venerated names, accompanied by corresponding gestures and genuflexions.†

* The Spaniards in the Missions are in the habit of applying the degrading epithet of beasts (*bestias*) to the wild or unconverted natives, while they assume to themselves, or even to their "converts," the term of rational creatures (*gente de razon*).—*Forbes.*

† "To go *to conquer* are the technical terms used by the missionaries in the Spanish part of America, to signify that they have

Such were the establishments formed for the spread of Catholicism, and the maintenance of Spanish authority, in Texas; but more providence was exercised in regard to the military efficiency of the Presidios, in proportion to the increasing accessibility of that province to dangerous intruders. The principal post and the leading Missions were at San Antonio de Bexar, which was situated in the heart of the district traversed in their hunting expeditions by the marauding Indians. In 1778, a colony, dependent upon San Antonio, was planted at Nacogdoches, the first settlers being introduced from Louisiana. About the same period, the town of La Bahia, or Goliad, was founded, and strongly fortified. A military post and a Mission, called Refugio, were also established on the small stream of that name. A trade was carried on from this place with the Mexicans of Tamaulipas, Coahuila, and Chihuahua. The beauty and fertility of the country around San Antonio—the salubrity of the climate—the facilities for Indian trading and pastoral pursuits—the proselytizing zeal of the missionary fathers—and the still lingering power of Spain—gave to the settlement a semblance of prosperity, notwithstanding the unpromising character of its original founders. The town and its environs are said to have contained, at one period, above 8000 inhabitants; horses and cattle abounded; and there was a considerable cultivation of sugar and cotton. The plan of the town was an oblong square, from

planted crosses amid which the Indians have constructed a few huts; but, unfortunately for the Indians, the words *conquer* and *civilize* are not synonymous."—*Humboldt.*

which streets extended at right angles. The houses were constructed almost entirely of stone, one story high, and protected by walls from three to four feet in thickness. The Alamo, an oblong enclosure, containing about an acre of ground, and surrounded by a wall, between eight and ten feet high, and three feet thick, was situated at the north-eastern part of the town, on the left bank of the San Antonio river. The town itself was embraced within the curves of the river, on the western side. Below Bexar, at intervals, on the banks of the San Antonio, rose the edifices appropriated to the Missions. The attractions of the site and the richness of the soil, exemplified the union of good taste and worldly sagacity, which seems to have been exhibited by the religious fraternities in all Catholic countries, when selecting their "locations." The Missions, four in number, presented the usual combination of church and fortress, and were constructed of massive stone. Some of the churches were capable of containing 600 or 700 persons,—were surmounted with enormous bells, and ornamented with statues and paintings, their roofs being of stone, lofty and arched. The Mission of San José, on the west side of the river, four miles below San Antonio, was no mean specimen of architecture. To this Mission, collegiate and scholastic institutions were attached, under the superintendence of spiritual directors.

Secure in their strongholds, where their authority was absolute, the missionaries zealously persevered in reducing the Indians to the profession of Catholicism, and submission to predial servitude. By the joint aid of secular and sacerdotal agencies, they

succeeded in subduing the vagrant habits of a considerable number of the "Red skins," who, through the cogency of a rigid discipline, were taught in time to repeat the offices of St. Francis, to chant hymns to the Virgin, and to practise those industrial arts that were deemed most conducive to the temporal welfare of the establishment. Mutinous dispositions, on the part of stubborn neophytes, were repressed by the military arm; but so efficacious was the system for producing complete mental prostration, that the services of the soldiers were seldom invoked, and were, in sooth, by no means to be coveted by the fathers, composed, as those troops generally were, of the dregs of their class.

Guards and stout walls were indispensable to the existence of the Missions of Texas. The early settlers in the province suffered severely from Indian violence and cupidity. The northern tribes were, with few exceptions, inveterate freebooters and homicides; and their intercourse with the Colonists instructed them in the value of the products of civilization, and stimulated them to possess them, in default of honest means, by acts of treachery and outrage. Fear of their aggressions limited the range of the settlements; and the only and true mode of securing their beneficial extension—by the introduction of emigrants in adequate numbers—neither accorded with the views of the Spanish government, nor with the policy of the friars. For the purpose of cutting off the communication of foreigners with its southerly provinces, the former aimed, in holding Texas, to maintain it as a prohibited desert,—to preserve their monopoly of land

and labour; the latter, diligently seconded the measures of exclusion prescribed by the State.

Indeed, the labourers in the apostolic vineyard evinced a degree of worldly wisdom worthy of the most astute worshippers of Mammon. Not only did they contrive that their lines should fall in pleasant places, but they took every precaution to preserve their corporate superiority in the soil, free from secular competition. Virtually monopolising the privilege of granting lands, they were very sparing of its exercise, except on behalf of their serfs and dependents. Lest the descendants of the military should become too numerous in time for monastic repose, expedients were devised for limiting their increase. According to the regulations of the Spanish service, no officer or soldier was permitted to marry without licence from the sovereign; and, with the power possessed by the priesthood at the court of his Catholic Majesty, it was easy for the Franciscans to turn the restriction into an interdict. If laxity of morals and the scandal of a Mestizo population, were the result of enforced abstinence from wedlock on the part of the troops, the fathers could console themselves by the reflection, that earthly good is rarely unalloyed by some admixture of evil; and that the immorality of a garrison was a light matter, when poised in the balance with the glory of St. Francis and the success of their endeavours for the conversion of the heathen.

Assisted by the contributions of the devout and charitable, and endowed with lands of inexhaustible fertility, an adequate supply of labour was all that the friars required to ensure the accumulation of

wealth. This they obtained by their forays among the aboriginal tribes, for whose servitude the bare means of subsistence, with the privilege of participating in the ceremonial of Roman Catholic worship, were considered ample compensation. The produce of the lands, and all the profits arising from sales, were entirely at the disposal of the friars: whatever was not required for the support of the Mission, was appropriated to a fund placed under their supervision and control.

A population, consisting chiefly of expatriated friars,* vagabond soldiers, enthralled and savage Indians, with the motley offspring of Mexican licentiousness, was eminently adapted for retaining Texas, consistently with the policy of Spain, in the condition of an unimproved and unexplored wilderness. Accordingly, from the year 1764, when, by the acquisition of Louisiana, the Mexican authorities were freed from the immediate neighbourhood of a formidable power, no perceptible endeavour was made by them for the improvement of the province. On the contrary, the gradual reduction of the garrisons coincident with the declension of Spanish power, left the scattered settlements so much exposed to the insults and oppressions of the Indians, that their decay became inevitable. At the close of the last century, in addition to the towns, or rather villages, on the Rio Grande, founded by different Mexican viceroys, and frequently bearing their names,—there were but three urban settlements of any note in Texas, and these stationary, or retrograding: San Antonio de Bexar, Goliad, and Nacogdoches. Besides these places, there were only a few Missions

and frontier posts. The population had diminished —the glory of the missionaries had departed—the curse of a vain, arbitrary, selfish, corrupt, and superannuated government was upon the land ; and beyond the precincts of garrisoned walls, there was no security for life or property from a savage and insolent foe, that roamed at will from the ocean-like prairies of the Arkansas, to the borders of the Gulf of Mexico—from the wooded slopes of the Trinidad, to the mountainous wastes of the Bolson de Mapimi. The history of Texas for a hundred years subsequent to the expedition of Alonzo de León, is a dreary register of petty territorial squabbles, barbarous feuds, and feats of monkish strategy. If there be a curiosity so rampant as to long for a minute and elaborate narrative of such matters, materials for its gratification may perhaps be obtained in the records of the department of the Indies, deposited in the cities of Madrid and Mexico, and the reports and correspondence of the Franciscan missionaries, which are doubtless still preserved in the archives of the order at Rome.

CHAPTER II.

Communication between the United States and Mexico—Spanish precautions against the spread of Republican Principles—Fate of Philip Nolan, the first armed adventurer in Texas from the United States—Burr's Conspiracy—Retrospective view of the state of the American Colonies under the dominion of Spain—Condition of Mexico previous to 1808—The Indians—The Clergy—The departments of Colonial Administration in Mexico and Spain—Failure of the Colonial System—General Venality and Corruption—Anti-commercial Laws—Progress of Smuggling and decline of Legitimate Trade—Invidious Distinctions between Old Spaniards and Mexican Creoles.

Vast plains covered with rank vegetation served for common boundaries between the territories of the American confederation and those of Mexico. From Louisiana to the Rio Grande, with the exception of the marshes near the coast, there were but few natural obstacles to the progress of travellers. A communication was opened along this line with the Internal Provinces of Mexico, by persons who resorted thither from Louisiana for the purchase of cattle and horses. Humboldt mentions that several of his Mexican friends had traversed the road from New Orleans to the capital of New Spain. To avoid the marshes, the road struck off to the north, towards the parallel of the 32nd degree of latitude. From Natchez, on the Mississippi, it ran by the American fort near Natchitoches, past the old station of the Adaes, to Chichi, eight leagues from which, according to M. Lafond, an able French engineer, were

hills abounding in coal. From the Adaes the route lay onwards to San Antonio de Bexar, Loredo (on the left bank of the Rio Grande), Saltillo, Charcas, San Luis Potosi, and Queretaro, to the city of Mexico. Two months and a half were, at the period of Humboldt's visit, required to travel over this greatly diversified line of country, in which, from Natchitoches to the banks of the Rio Grande, wayfarers were obliged to sleep without the shelter of a roof.

It will readily be inferred that the success of the United States in achieving their independence, and the rapid growth of the Federation, were not regarded with indifference by the intolerant and suspicious government of Spain, whose step-dame treatment of its Transatlantic dependencies had supplied abundant cause for disaffection. Lest the dreaded principles of the North American Republic should contaminate the populous districts of Mexico, it became more than ever necessary to guard against the intrusion of foreigners through Texas. The feelings entertained by the Spanish authorities were manifested in a favourite saying of a Captain-General of the Eastern Internal Provinces (Don Nemisio Salcedo), that, had he the power, he would prevent the birds from flying across the boundary-line between Texas and the United States. Perpetual imprisonment, at least, awaited the unlucky wanderer who was caught on the forbidden soil without the protection of a special licence.*

Notwithstanding the risk of capture and punishment, the love of gain, or the excitement of travel or the chase, induced, from time to time, some of those adventurous spirits who lead the van of Anglo-American settlement, to trespass on the loneliness of the Texan savannas. One of the first adventurers, who endeavoured to sustain himself in the country by force of arms, was an Irishman by birth, and a successful trader at Natchez. In the manuscript authority with which I have been favoured by President Lamar, his name is written "Noland," obviously an incorrect orthography of a thoroughly Irish patronymic. Omitting the final consonant, I am authorised to say that, in 1789, or thereabouts, Philip Nolan, at the head of a company of fifty men, entered Texas, and pursued his way to the upper waters of the rivers Brazos and Colorado. The ostensible object of the expedition was the catching of wild horses, but it was supposed that its leader cherished the secret intention of making discoveries in the (reputed) gold regions of the Comanches. Whatever may have been his ultimate object, he was betrayed by a man called Mordecai Richards, who, although a spy of the Spanish government, had a son engaged in the enterprise. The governor of Texas, with a force of three hundred militia, went in quest of Nolan, and finding him at his wild horse pens, summoned him to surrender. The summons was met by an instant and

to enter the colonies without a special licence from his Catholic Majesty. Practically, permissions to travel were not granted unless researches in Natural History formed their ostensible object.

determined negative, and the fearless Irishman marshalled his little band for battle. After an obstinate contest, in which Nolan was killed, those that remained of his followers surrendered at discretion, and were, with few exceptions, taken to Chihuahua and shot. Two of the number—Jack House and Robert Ashley*--effected their escape; another, named Bean, was pardoned on account of his youth, and Stephen Richards, son of the spy, was forced to enter the Spanish army, where he served many years, and died shortly after the period of his release.

Nolan's inroad, the result of private speculation and personal hardihood, had no political bearing, and is only to be recorded as a matter of curiosity. It was not until 1805 and the subsequent year that Texas, the knowledge of which had previously been confined to the border "pioneers" and some of the most instructed Americans, began to excite general attention in the United States. The cause of the interest then awakened respecting a comparatively unknown province was the project which, under the name of "Burr's Conspiracy," disturbed the minds of American citizens with serious apprehensions for the integrity of the Union.

Aaron Burr, the son of a clergyman of Connecticut, whose father was a German emigrant of very respectable parentage, served in the War of Independence, under Washington, and attained the rank of colonel, with a high reputation for bravery and skill. After peace was established, he sought from his profession as a lawyer, the means of creditable subsistence, and in party politics the gratification of

his ambition. In a contest for the Presidency of the United States, he divided the suffrages of the Democratic party with Thomas Jefferson, and succeeded in 1801, to the office of Vice-President, on the ultimate triumph of his competitor. Having, under circumstances deemed unwarrantable, challenged and killed General Alexander Hamilton, a political opponent, greatly respected for his estimable qualities, Burr's popularity declined, and he was not reelected after the expiry of his first term of office. Being of expensive habits, his private affairs fell into disorder, and, for the purpose of retrieving his circumstances, and indulging his appetite for power and notoriety, he embarked in that dark and crooked enterprise, which ended in the ruin of his fortunes and the humiliation of his name.

According to the generally received version of the affair, Colonel Burr announced, in 1805, a grand plan for founding a settlement on certain lands on the Washita, westward of the Mississippi. Under cover of this project, he concealed the design of revolutionizing Mexico, and, as was alleged, but it would seem groundlessly, a scheme for severing the United States, and establishing a Republic in the West, from a line of separation indicated by the Alleghany Mountains. Protracted disputes between the United States and Spain, concerning the navigation of the Mississippi, and the right of deposite at New Orleans, had prepared the minds of the Americans for a Spanish war, which would have been popular with the Western people, to whose interests the recent cession of Louisiana by France had given an apparently different direction. Of

the prevailing impulses and opinions Burr took advantage, and countenanced—so far as regarded the Mexican project—by General Wilkinson, commander of the United States troops in Louisiana, General Andrew Jackson, and other persons of note and influence, he collected armed adherents, and prepared to descend the Mississippi to New Orleans, to pass the Sabine, and march against the capital of Mexico.

A plot in which so many persons were necessarily embarked could not be concealed from the Executive of the Republic. In the month of November, 1806, President Jefferson apprised the citizens of the Union, that a criminal expedition was organised, for which arms and ships had been collected, and officers commissioned. In the summer and autumn of 1806, Colonel Burr, who was then on a tour through the Western States, was brought, as the prime mover in these illegal preparations, before two different grand juries in Kentucky, and, after investigation, descharged. It is true that the popular inclination in Kentucky was favourable to an attack upon Mexico, but, so far as any testimony was adduced, it went to prove merely the intention of Burr to settle the Washita lands. Nothing daunted, he continued his arrangements until, on the 3d of March, 1807, he was arrested by order of the United States Government, on a charge of treason, on the Tombigbee River, in the Mississippi territory, and removed for trial to Richmond, in Virginia, where he arrived on the 25th of the same month. Two bills of indictment were there preferred against him in the Circuit Court of the United States, Chief

Justice Marshall presiding—one for treason against the Republic, the other for misdemeanor, in setting on foot a military enterprise to be directed against the territory of a foreign prince with whom the United States were at peace. After proceedings so tedious and harassing as almost to assume the aspect of executive persecution, the case ultimately closed, in October, 1807, by the Chief Justice declaring that there were no grounds of suspicion as to the treason, and directing that Burr and his fellow-prisoner, Herman Blennerhasset (an Irishman of property and education, who occupied a picturesque island on the Ohio River, since called by his name), should give bail in three thousand dollars for further trial in Ohio. No further proceedings were instituted, and in June, 1808, Colonel Burr sailed from New York for England. In Europe he remained several years, vainly endeavouring to obtain the sanction of some leading power to his favourite plan for revolutionizing Spanish America. He returned to his native country in the summer of 1812, a marked and disappointed man, resumed the practice of his profession, and died on Staten Island, in the State of New York, on the 14th of September, 1836, having survived all who were connected with him by ties of consanguinity or early friendship.

From the ample exposition of his views furnished by his biographer, Mr. M. L. Davis of New York, Aaron Burr does not appear to have meditated more than the revolutionizing of Mexico, and, failing that, a settlement on the Washita. The latter was a

speculation arising out of a purchase of lands under a Spanish title. Baron P. N. Tut de Bastrop, previous to the acquisition of Louisiana by the United States, had contracted with the Spanish government for a section of country exceeding thirty miles square, lying between the Mississippi and Natchitoches. By the terms of the contract, the Baron engaged to settle, in a specified period, two hundred families within the limits of the grant. A Colonel Lynch subsequently obtained, for about 100,000 dollars, a conveyance from Bastrop of six-tenths of his interest under the contract, and Burr purchased 400,000 acres from Lynch, for 50,000 dollars. It will be seen, hereafter, that the transfer by the *empresario* (contractor) Bastrop to Lynch, and the sale by Lynch to Burr, were both at variance with Spanish law and usage.

On the 20th of December, 1803, M. Laussat, as French Prefect of Louisiana, made a formal delivery of that colony and its dependencies to the United States, in the City Hall of New Orleans, and Mr. Claiborne, governor of the Mississippi territory, assumed the civil administration of the province. The American troops, under the command of General Wilkinson, were simultaneously introduced into the city. It was while on this command that Wilkinson became a participator in Burr's scheme of Mexican invasion, which he afterwards claimed the credit of having frustrated, although Burr declared most solemnly before his death, that, without Wilkinson's force of 600 men, as a nucleus for an army, he would never have ventured to exe-

cute his design—being perfectly aware that the men he might collect would, for military operations, be, at first, little better than a mob.*

During the year 1806, and in the midst of Burr's preparations for a Mexican campaign, a detachment was sent from the Spanish garrison at Nacogdoches, to re-establish the old abandoned post of the Adaes, east of the Sabine. Salcedo, Captain-general of the Eastern Internal Provinces, with Simon Herrera, left Monterey, the capital of New Leon, at the head of a considerable force, and crossed the Trinity River, for the purpose of sustaining the revival of the settlement. Intimation of their approach having been received by the United States' authorities, General Wilkinson, accompanied by Governor Claiborne and his militia, advanced towards the Sabine. Whilst the risk of angry collision seemed imminent, the alarm produced by Burr's "Conspiracy" was considered a sufficient plea for the recall of the American troops to New Orleans. Conciliatory overtures were, in consequence, tendered by Wilkinson to Herrera. The former declared that his march was occasioned by no disrespect or hostile disposition towards Spain, the sole object in view being the peaceful occupancy of the frontier territory of the United States. The language of Herrera was equally bland: his sole intention, he averred, was to establish a frontier patrol, to prevent the introduction of contraband goods. After these dove-like protestations, the terms of mutual withdrawal were easily arranged. It was agreed that the Spanish forces

* Memoirs of Aaron Burr, by M. L. Davis.

should fall back on Nacogdoches, and the Americans on Natchitoches; with the further stipulation, that the Americans would not afterwards cross the Arroyo Hondo, provided the Spaniards abstained from crossing the Sabine. These conditions were understood to be binding on the leaders of the respective forces only, without reference to the rights or pretensions of their governments. The commanders and their troops retired accordingly; and this is all the information to be obtained concerning what has been termed the "Neutral Territory," between the Mexican provinces and the United States.

It is alleged, and documents in support of the allegation have been published, that after the trial of Colonel Burr at Richmond, an *aid-de-camp* was despatched by General Wilkinson to Mexico, instructed to demand of the viceroy Yturrigaray, "repayment of his expenditure and compensation for his services to Spain, in defeating Burr's expedition against Mexico." The sum said to have been demanded was 200,000 dollars, of which the viceroy refused to disburse a single rial, professing to consider the claim "irreconcileable to the honour of an officer and patriot of a foreign state."* If General Wilkinson really solicited money from the Spanish Government under such pretences, the presumption is that he had concluded a compact with Salcedo during the bloodless expedition to the frontier, under the conviction that the premature discovery of Burr's warlike designs would be fatal to their common prospects of aggrandizement from Mexican conquest.

* Memoirs of Aaron Burr, by M. L. Davis.

In order to render intelligible the nature of the operations of which Texas became the theatre in succeeding years, it is necessary to review the political condition of Spanish America previous to the commencement of the present century, and especially the condition of Mexican affairs as they approached towards a crisis in 1808.

According to the terms agreed upon between the first adventurers in America and the Spanish crown, the expense attending discovery and conquest was to fall upon the former, who were to retain the vassalage of the native tribes, upon condition of instructing them in the Christian religion, according to the Roman Catholic form. The sovereignty of all the newly-discovered countries was to be vested in the Crown of Spain, which guaranteed that "on no account should they be separated, wholly, or in part, from that monarchy."* The Emperor Charles V. who formally united "the Indies" to the Crown of Castile; bound himself and his successors for ever. that if, in violation of this covenant, they should make any gift, or alienation, either wholly or in part, the same should be void.

The stipulations of this primary compact contained the germs of the mal-administration of the Hispano-American dependencies. They prepared the way for the bondage of the natives, the establishment of an insulated and unpopular political hierarchy, and the absorption of all colonial rights and

* *Leyes de las Indias*, *Ley* I. *tit.* I. *lib.* 3. By the laws of the Indies, all acts relating to the conquest of America were expunged.

interests in the single principle of regal predominance in Church and State.

As early as 1499, Columbus granted lands to his followers, and distributed among them a certain number of Indians, who were required to cultivate an allotted quantity of ground for their masters. These unfortunate beings were considered as much the property of their conquerors as any of the ordinary spoils of war. This was the origin of the *repartimiento*, or distribution of Indians, which was introduced into all the Spanish settlements with such calamitous consequences to the vanquished. A fifth portion of the Mexicans was reserved for the king by Cortez, who found it more profitable to retain them in slavery, than to exterminate them, like the Aboriginal inhabitants of Hispaniola.* Many were sold into distant captivity; multitudes perished from accumulated hardships and insufficient food.

In 1542, Charles V. abolished the *repartimientos* and transferred the rights of vassalage, possessed over the Indians by individual proprietors, to the

* "All the plants," said Cortez, in a letter to Charles V., October 1524, "thrive admirably in this land. We shall not proceed here, as we have done in the isles, where we have neglected cultivation and *destroyed the inhabitants*." For the purpose of saving a handful of Aboriginals, Las Casas accomplished the introduction of enslaved negroes into Hispaniola (St. Domingo). The selfish experience of Cortez induced him to abstain from slaughtering the Mexicans, whose compulsory labour left no scope for the profitable employment of kidnapped Africans, except on the deadly sea-line of the *Tierra Caliente*. Cortez rendered one service to humanity by introducing wheat into Mexico, to the great and lasting advantage of the natives.

Crown. An Indian capitation tax was imposed, the amount of which has varied in different provinces, and at different periods. Previous to the Mexican revolution it amounted to ten francs, besides which, the natives were chargeable with fees to the church, for its numerous rites and ceremonies. With a view to amend their condition, the system of *encomiendas* was introduced, which invested the Indians with some recognised rights, and consigned them to the protectorship of the superior landholders. Under these arrangements, every Indian became either the immediate vassal of the Crown, or, through its sanction, of the owner of the *encomienda*—the specified district in which the *encomiendero* resided.

The constrained servitude of the Indians was of two kinds—labour in the fields, and labour in the mines. For the latter, they were divided into classes called *mitas*, who served in turn, at regular periods, and for a definite time. No alleviation of their sufferings arose from the system of *encomiendas*, which, by the death of the proprietors and their descendants, became nearly extinct about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Those grants that remained were annulled by Charles III., by whom also measures were adopted for suppressing the *Corregidores*, who by selling indispensable articles to the Indians (of whom they were legally superintendents) at exorbitant prices, contrived to keep them permanently their debtors, and thus retained them in a state of practical bondage. The increase of population and food having rendered the supply of native labour abundant and cheap, the indirect slavery of the colonial *mitas* was gradually abolished.

The establishment of Intendencies, under the vice-royalty of Count de Galvez, followed up by active endeavours for the better superintendence of the Indians, produced a beneficial change in their condition. Still it was only by comparison with the miseries of the past, that their lot could be deemed tolerable. The attempts of Galvez to obtain for them the benefits of education were resisted by the Crown*. They were still deprived of all the valuable privileges of citizens—were treated as minors under the tutelage of their superiors, and could make no contract beyond the value of ten pounds. Intermarriage with the whites, and the use of fire-arms were prohibited; and the only situations or employments left open to them were those of common labourers or artisans. The residents in large towns were governed by Spanish laws and authorities; but the majority were pent up in their villages, and there conserved in barbarism by petty magistrates, either of their own race, the recognized descendants of their ancient chiefs, or persons appointed at discretion by the government.

After remaining under the rule of Spain for nearly three hundred years, the native Mexicans were, at the close of the last century, in most respects, degenerated from the rank which they occupied in the days of Montezuma. The spirit of nationality had been subdued, and the whole race had descended

* Galvez, a man of extraordinary talent and address, was greatly revered by the Indians, with whose language and manners he was well acquainted. During his vice-royalty he improved and beautified the country, and, it is said, meditated the establishment of its independence.

to a common level of degradation. Their legalized inferiority and the general licentiousness, were scandalously conspicuous in a population of Mestizoes and other motley castes, nearly equal in amount to the whole aboriginal population. All these classes were in a state of deep moral debasement*. The natives might be said to have no property; and, considered in the aggregate, they offered a picture of extreme destitution. Banished into the most barren districts, and indolent from nature, but still more from their political situation, they lived only from hand to mouth. The streets of the splendid city of Mexico swarmed with from 20,000 to 30,000 wretches resembling the Neapolitan Lazzaroni, of whom the greatest number passed the night in the open air, and basked in the sun during the day, with nothing to cover them but a garment of dirty flannel.

Whenever, from severe drought, or any other cause, the crop of maize, on which the native population almost exclusively depended for subsistence, was materially injured, they were exposed to the ravages of famine. In 1784, the number of persons swept off by the fatal union of famine and disease was estimated at more than 300,000; and be it always recollected, that the Mexican Indians were not a race of savage hunters, disdainful of agricul-

* "For the loosenesse of their lives and publicke scandals committed by them and the better sort of Spaniards, I have heard them say often, who have professed much religion and feare of God, that they really thought God would destroy that city, and give up the countrey into the power of some other nation."—Account of Mexico, in the Travels of Thomas Gage, an English Dominican Friar, published in 1648.

ture, like the Red Men of the North, but a mild and ingenious people, with a progress in civilization similar to that displayed by the Chinese. "From these simple people," says the author of 'Six Months in Mexico,' "the unprotected traveller has nothing to fear; they are the most courteous, gentle, and unoffending creatures in existence."*

It was literally under the banner of the Cross that Cortez and his associates perpetrated their acts of butchery and rapine in America. The sword of reckless and avaricious adventurers hewed out a track for the missionary "conquests," by which the helpless Indian was consigned to the joint care of a friar and a corporal. In a few years after the reduction of the Mexican empire, fraud and force succeeded in obtaining the nominal adhesion of 4,000,000 of idolaters to Christianity. But though the profession was more rational, the faith remained essentially the same. The policy of the Spanish missionaries was satisfied with a compromise between Catholic observances and Indian superstition. "The native Americans," says Humboldt, "like the Hindoos and other nations who have long groaned under a civil and military despotism, adhere to their customs, manners, and opinions, with extraordinary obstinacy. I say opinions; for the introduction of Christianity has produced almost no other effect on the Indians of Mexico than to substitute new ceremonies, the symbols of a gentle and humane religion, for the ceremonies of a sanguinary worship. This change from old to new rites was the effect of

* Six Months' Residence and Travels in Mexico. By W. Bullock. London, 1825.

constraint and not of persuasion, and was produced by political events alone. Dogma has not succeeded to dogma, but ceremony to ceremony; the natives know nothing whatever of religion, but the exterior forms of worship. Fond of whatever is connected with a prescribed order of ceremonies, they find in the Christian religion particular enjoyment. The festivals of the Church—the fireworks with which they are accompanied—the processions, mingled with dances and whimsical disguises, are a most fertile source of amusement for the lower Indians, whom I have seen masked, and adorned with small tinkling bells, performing savage dances around the altar, while a monk of St. Francis elevated the host." On a disinterred idol being exposed to the public gaze in the city of Mexico, an Indian remarked, with grave simplicity, in reply to the jest of a spectator, "It is true we have three very good Spanish gods, but we might still have been allowed to keep a few of those of our ancestors!"*—This occurred so late as 1823.

The ecclesiastical establishment, of which the gross ignorance and abject superstition of the Indians were the opprobrium, was fashioned after that of Spain. The exactions for its maintenance were very burdensome, and pressed with peculiar severity on the energies of a growing dependency. Tithes were introduced so early as 1501, and laws were framed to enforce their payment. Not only were clerical impositions laid upon every article of agricultural produce, they were extended likewise to

* Six Months in Mexico.

those which were, in part, the fruit of manufacturing industry, such as sugar, indigo, and cochineal. The wealth of the Church was also greatly augmented, and the productive capital of the country proportionably lessened, by the voluntary endowment of monastic institutions. In 1570, Philip II. introduced the inquisition into Spanish America; but, with a singular exercise of considerate forbearance, the natives were exempted, on the ground of mental incompetency, from its baleful jurisdiction. Their heresies were only to be noticed by the bishops, who held spiritual courts in their respective dioceses, over which they presided, assisted by the fiscal, proctor, and vicar-general. All the ecclesiastical courts were under the control of the viceroy.

The extraordinary powers conferred by the Pope on the Spanish Crown constituted a remarkable feature in the ecclesiastical affairs of America. To the king were granted the patronage and disposal of all benefices in the Transatlantic Church, of which he became the secular head, and thus exercised a prerogative unknown to his domestic sovereignty. Until they had been examined and recommended by the Council of the Indies, and approved by the king, the papal Bulls could not be admitted into Spanish America. The effect of these concessions was to make the Church an auxiliary branch of the Government, and to render the hierarchy as suppliant to the will of the Crown as its officers civil or military. Hence the inequality which marked the condition of the clergy, of whom many suffered extreme poverty, while others were in possession of magnificent incomes. The Archbishop of Mexico

enjoyed an aggregate income exceeding 120,000 dollars; several of the bishops were almost as munificently endowed; while the priests in the Indian villages were in the annual receipt of from twenty to twenty-five pounds sterling. Hence also the alienation of the inferior clergy of Creole descent from a government which, disregarding their claims, restricted ecclesiastical honours and emoluments to European Spaniards. There being no middle class in Spain to share and equalize the royal patronage, princely revenues were appropriated to the American prelates and other dignitaries. The average provision set apart for the parish priests, or *curas*, of the settlements, was comparatively small. The *doctrineros*, or doctrinal priests, who officiated in districts peopled by subjugated Indians, had their main pecuniary dependence on the fees of baptism, marriage, and interment. The *missioneros*, or missionaries, employed to convert the *Indios bravos*, derived their scanty stipends from the treasury; all, however, were aided by pastoral gifts and pious benefactions. Perhaps to the inadequate provision made for the inferior clergy ought, in charity, to be ascribed much of the sordid discipline that prevailed at the Missions.

The concessions of the Roman Pontiff to the Spanish Crown, operated, on the whole, unfavourably for the colonies. For the relinquished patronage of bishoprics and benefices, succeeding popes substituted the grant of extraordinary privileges to the regular clergy, allowing the members of certain missionary orders to accept parochial charges, and to receive their emoluments in complete indepen-

dence of a diocesan. Of these errant friars, great numbers flocked from Europe to the new countries; some moved by apostolic zeal—more by considerations altogether selfish and worldly. The former devoted themselves with an earnest and ardent spirit to the work of conversion, and evinced a humane, and sometimes an enlightened regard for the improvement of their primitive flocks; the latter, in contempt of their monastic vows, engaged in traffic, oppressed the poor creatures they were commissioned to instruct, and, not unfrequently, indulged in gross licentiousness which, in the safe obscurity of remote stations, among an enthralled and despised race, knew no restraint of decency—acknowledged no limit save animal satiety.

The Mexican clergy of all classes amounted in the aggregate, at the beginning of the present century, to between 13,000 and 14,000 individuals. In La Puebla de los Angelos (Angels' Town), with a population of 60,000 souls, there were 100 spires and domes appertaining to religious edifices; and the beggary and depravity of the people appeared in deplorable proximity with the wealth and luxury of the church. In the city of Mexico, containing a population estimated at 150,000, there were 550 secular and 1,646 regular clergy, besides nuns. On the Mexicans, Creole and Indian, fell the burden of satisfying the extravagance or necessities of the redundant Spanish priesthood, from the mitred dignitary of the palace to the cowled servitor of the monastery.

The Spanish colonial system neither contemplated nor acknowledged any intermediate power

between the sovereign and the colonists. Absolute at home, the supremacy of the King of Spain was still more sovereign and complete in America. The Bull of Pope Alexander VI., which bestowed on Ferdinand and Isabella all the countries which they might discover west of a given latitude, was the authority on which the Spanish monarchs claimed the most valuable proportion of the American continent as their personal property. From the Crown proceeded all grants of land, and, if they failed from any cause, to the Crown they again reverted. As monarch of the Indies, the king was unchecked by ancient and powerful grandees, popular usages, or prescriptive rights; the Church, once a formidable rival to royalty, and always a potent engine of control in Catholic Europe, was in America an arm of the executive. The pervading principle of the colonial government was to concentrate the hopes and fears—the desires and apprehensions—of all ranks and classes exclusively in the king. To accomplish this object among the natives, the missionaries were directed to blend the doctrines of unreasoning vassalage and passive obedience with the precepts of religion. They taught, accordingly, that the visitations of Divine wrath—plague, pestilence, and famine—the tempest and the deluge—were the frequent and merited punishments of the disloyal and disobedient. The measures adopted by Spain to secure the dependence of America, and restrain the Indians from any attempt to regain their ancient state of freedom, seem to have been concerted not so much with a view to thwart their inclinations, as to leave them in entire possession of their

prejudices and vices, so far as they did not avowedly clash with the external observances of religion.

The machinery of government in "the Indies," whatever might be its practical merits, was ingenious and promising in theory. The representation of the Crown was lodged with the respective viceroys, captains-general, and governors. To the viceroy, who was appointed for seven years, belonged the command of the troops: he was assisted by a legal adviser and a council of war. The declared salary of the viceroy was large; his emoluments, open and illicit, were enormous.

In the Council of the Indies, which formed a part of the administration at Madrid, was vested, from the early date of 1511, the supreme government of all the Spanish possessions in America. The king was always supposed to be present, as head of this important body. In its better days, the Council was composed of the most eminent public men, more especially such as had acquired experience and distinction by civil service in the colonies.

Its jurisdiction extended to every department—ecclesiastical, civil, military, and commercial. All laws and ordinances relative to the government and police of the colonies originated with the Council, and required the approval of two-thirds of its members before they were issued in the royal name. It had the right of nominating the principal civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries, subject to the confirmation of the king, and the power of determining appeals from the decisions of the *Audiencias*, the highest of the colonial tribunals. All persons employed in America, from the viceroy downwards, were re-

sponsible to the Council, which reviewed their proceedings, rewarded their services, and punished their misconduct. To it was submitted whatever intelligence, whether public, private, or secret, was received from America, and every project for improving the administration, the police, or the commerce of the colonies.*

In this well-selected cabinet lingered the latest remnant of the vigour and sagacity which once characterized the councils of Spain: it was the last branch of administration that yielded to the pestilent tide of Peninsular corruption.

Next in rank to the Council of the Indies was the colonial tribunal called *Real Audiencia* (Royal Audience). The *Audiencias* were formed on the model of the Spanish court of chancery, and one of them was established in every province, with power to determine civil and criminal causes. The number of judges was regulated by the extent and population of the sphere of jurisdiction. Besides their appellate powers, the *Audiencias* had the attribute of defenders of the common weal and supporters of the royal prerogative. The *Real Audiencia* was the ultimate court of appeal within the limits of a viceroyalty. Of this court the viceroy was president; and while it was legally entitled to exercise supervision over his actions, it was his pro-

* The establishment of a similar board in England is much required, and could hardly fail to be attended with beneficial results. Unfortunately for the practical success of the Council of the Indies, its laws, which form the best part of Spanish jurisprudence, were not aided in their application by local representative bodies.

vince to render an account of its proceedings to the Council of the Indies. On the death of a viceroy, the supreme power became vested in the *Real Audiencia*, and the chief judge assisted by his associates assumed the direction of affairs. The strictest precautions were taken in the theoretic frame-work of the colonial administration to secure executive integrity, and to prevent the viceroys and governors from connecting themselves by ties of interest or blood with the provinces under their superintendence and direction.

For the regulation of fiscal, financial, and commissariat affairs, admiralty jurisdiction, and other branches of civil administration, Intendants holding office for five years were appointed by the Council of the Indies, independent of the viceroy. Each of these officers presided, with almost uncontrolled authority, over a district sometimes more extensive than a European kingdom. Subordinate to the Intendants were a host of salaried officers.

In addition to the Council of the Indies at Madrid, a board in subordination to it was established at Seville, called *Casa de la Contratacion*, for regulating the commercial intercourse between Spain and America. There were also, in some of the seaports of Mexico, tribunals named *Consulados*, having cognizance of commercial affairs only, whose decisions were subject to revision by the viceroy.

Special privileges, or *Fueros*, were conceded to different professional and corporate bodies—civil, military, naval, mercantile, and ecclesiastical.

A form of municipal government similar to that of Spain was granted to towns, villages, and rural

districts, under the name of *Cabildos*. The *Ayuntamiento*, or Municipal Council, was composed of chiefs—*Regidores*, and magistrates—*Alcaldes*. The cities were divided into *barrios*, and each *barrio* had an *Alcalde*, or justice of peace, for the quarter. Throughout the rural districts there were *Alcaldes*, whose jurisdiction extended over prescribed limits; their legal term of office was two years, and they were responsible to the Intendant of the department. The *Ayuntamientos* theoretically possessed powers analagous to those vested in the municipal corporations of Great Britain and the United States.

Such, in outline, was the machinery contrived and completed by Ferdinand of Aragon, Charles V., and their successors, for the government of Spanish America. Its practical operation, and the policy it subserved, remain to be noticed. For the maintenance of its establishments, the Crown had a revenue, consisting of three branches: I. The payments made to the king, as lord paramount of the country, which included a share of the product of mines, with the tribute exacted from the Indians as crown vassals. II. The revenues received by the king as head of the church, which included first-fruits, one-ninth of the tithes, and the profits arising from the sale of indulgences, under the Papal Bull, of *Cruzado*. The last have been estimated to produce a revenue of 4,000,000 dollars. This Bull, originally granted to raise funds for the Crusades, sanctioned the sale of indulgences, which contained absolution for certain offences, and conferred immunities, such as eating prohibited food in Lent, &c. III. The royal monopolies, and duties on merchandise,

which clogged and embarrassed every commercial transaction, from those of the merchant to the petty retailer. In return for this revenue, the whole of the colonial expenditure was defrayed by the Crown.

The working of the system fell, at the outset, far short of the laudable intentions of its originators. The Council of the Indies might frame wise and equitable laws, but, removed several thousand miles from the countries for which it legislated, it was unable to secure for its measures faithful and seasonable application. The multitude of its enactments, during a term of three hundred years, became in itself a fruitful source of confusion and litigation. As a court of remonstrance and final appeal, its remoteness from Mexico, and still more from Peru and Chili, was equivalent to a denial of justice to all but opulent suitors, and even to persons of this class the delay in obtaining a decision was a most serious grievance. It is obvious, besides, that to procure redress by complaints transmitted to the Council against the Colonial Executive was hardly possible, when the heads of that Executive were not merely strong in home connexions, but were the only recognised channels of petition and remonstrance.

It were foreign from the design of this work to trace and dwell upon the rank and destructive growth of mal-administration in New Spain. At the beginning of the present century, that country, in common with the other American provinces under the Spanish yoke, was enfeebled and barbarised by a continuance of profligate misrule. Corruption and peculation rioted openly in every department

of the government, and clung to every limb of the executive, from the representative of the King down to the meanest dependent of the Customs. The fact that government offices to which no salary was attached were in great request speaks volumes.

During the administration of Godoy, the stalwart favourite of the queen of the besotted Charles IV., every office was publicly sold, with the exception of those that were bestowed upon court minions as the reward of disgraceful service. Men destitute of talent, education, and character, were appointed to offices of the greatest responsibility in church and state, and panders and parasites were forced upon America, to superintend the finances, and preside in the supreme courts of appeal. So insignificant was the surplus revenue, notwithstanding the heavy and multiplied exactions on Spanish colonies and commerce, after defraying the expenses attendant on the collection, and allowing for official malversation, that the Crown derived little (if any) fiscal advantage from its American possessions. For the colonists there was no respite from official bloodsuckers. Each succeeding swarm of adventurers, in their eagerness to indemnify themselves for the money expended in purchasing their places, increased the calamities of provinces already wasted by the cupidity of their predecessors. Truly might the Hispano-Americans have exclaimed—"That which the palmer-worm hath left hath the locust eaten, that which the locust hath left hath the canker-worm eaten, and that which the canker-worm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten!"

Even the municipal establishments of Mexico were popular only in name. The situations of *Alcalde* and *Regidor* were put up to auction and sold to the highest bidder. In some districts the appointments were conferred as compensation for the trouble of militia service—the captain being made perpetual *Alcalde*, and the first and second lieutenants *Regidores*. The situation of *Procurador*, equivalent to town-clerk, was given to the first sergeant, for whom, if absent, the next in rank was to be substituted. These being the only courts of petty jurisdiction, a corporal or private was sometimes intrusted with the administration of justice in villages containing a considerable number of respectable proprietors, whose only remedy was an appeal to the provincial *Audiencia*, frequently at a most inconvenient distance, and always the source of vexatious uncertainty and expense. In 1794 four whole provinces were subject to this abuse—New Leon, Santander, Coahuila, and Texas.

The instruments of administrative oppression were almost to a man European Spaniards, and the policy of which they were both the representatives and the agents was the exhaustion and depression of the colonies for the (supposed) aggrandisement of the mother country. Persons who had no root in the soil were of course selected, in preference to those who were allied to it by ties of interest and kindred, for the work of humiliation and impoverishment. It was natural also that a cabinet sitting in Madrid should bestow its patronage upon Spaniards; yet it was more owing to this invidious preference than to the administrative depravities

under which their country languished, that the Creoles were at last exasperated into revolt. Such was their indolence, or timidity, that injustice might have been endured for a more protracted season, had not the continued accumulation of insult upon injury become intolerable.

And the injuries inflicted on the unhappy provinces were alike iniquitous and insane. The ruin of Spanish commerce preceded the loss of the colonies. Legitimate trade was so overlaid with duties and fettered with restrictions, that smuggling was reduced to a system. The most inexorable monopoly had, from the first, been maintained by Spain in supplying the wants of her dependencies. For a century the trade was confined to the single port of Seville—no foreign vessel was suffered to enter an American harbour—no American was permitted to own a ship. Every vessel chartered at Seville for America was ordered to sail from and return to that port. For the infringement of these laws the penalty was confiscation and *death.* The colonists were forbidden to manufacture any article, or raise any produce, which could be supplied by the mother country, for whose inferior commodities exorbitant prices, augmented by enormous duties, were exacted. These infamous laws were at length relaxed, owing to the increase of smuggling—the lawless vindicator of the rights of trade—but it was not until 1774, under Charles III., whose beneficent rule seemed the dawn of a brighter day, that even the restrictions which inhibited all internal intercourse and commerce between the

colonies of Spanish America were removed. The rearing of silk-worms, and the cultivation of the olive and the vine (auspicious children of the Mexican soil), were forbidden, and others—hemp, flax, indigo, and coffee—barely tolerated under discouraging limitations. To allay the selfish fears of the wine-merchants of Cadiz, a government order was issued, so late as 1802, to destroy the vines of Mexico. This order, which would have disgraced an Asiatic Pacha, was enforced at Dolores, a place afterwards memorable as the scene of the first insurrectionary outbreak.

But the almost exclusive selection for offices of trust of European Spaniards (*Gachupins*, as the colonists contemptuously called them), and the insolent proscription of the Creoles, who possessed nearly the whole wealth and territorial influence of Mexico, was the grievance that inflamed the blood. Down to the year 1810, out of one hundred and sixty viceroys, and five hundred and eighty-eight captains-general, governors, and presidents of the *Real Audiencia*, who had served in Spanish America, only eighteen were born in the country, and these had been reared and educated in Spain, and owed their appointments to European interest. Creoles being deemed unworthy of judicial honours, the judges of the *Audiencias* were invariably of European birth. All the prizes in church, army, navy, law—nay, even the facilities for acquiring opulence by commerce—were clutched by the privileged caste.

The corporate and professional *Fueros* were usu-

ally enjoyed at the expense of the native colonists, and the corrupt partiality of the officers of the Customs (themselves European Spaniards) threw the entire trade into the hands of their countrymen. In vain, too, did respectable Creoles and enlightened Europeans endeavour to bring notorious offenders of the ruling class to justice. Their attempts were defeated by the spirit of clanship, which was carried to such a pitch of unnatural extravagance, that the son of Spanish parents born in Mexico was considered by his own father of an inferior grade to his European book-keeper!—The arrogant pretensions of the Spaniards, the degeneracy of the Indians, and the laxity of public morals, introduced a novel species of aristocratic distinction —that of the skin. The greater or less degree of whiteness of the skin decided the rank which a person occupied in society. When a man of inferior condition disputed with one of the titled lords of the soil, he might be heard seriously to say, "Do you think me not so white as yourself?" In order to get rid of the imputation of being of an inferior caste, wealthy families frequently obtained the declaration of a high court of justice, to establish the purity of their blood. Many a dusky form has been clarified by the operation of largesses gracefully and discreetly administered to "the sages of the law."

Modifications and ameliorations of various kinds were at intervals introduced into the system by which Spain abused the patience of her colonies. These it is needless to enumerate, unproductive as they were of material results. The condition of

Mexico at the beginning of the present century was stamped with the repulsive features of an anarchical and semi-barbarous society, of which the elements were—an Aboriginal population, satisfied with existing in unmolested indigence; a chaos of particoloured castes, equally passive, ignorant, and superstitious; a numerous Creole class, wealthy, mortified, and discontented; and a compact phalanx of European officials—the pampered Mamlouks of the Crown—who contended for and profited by every act of administrative iniquity. Public opinion was unrepresented; there were no popularly chosen authorities, no deliberative assemblies of the people, no independent publications,—for the miserably meagre press was but a shadow, a light-abhorring phantom, evoked to stifle free discussion, by suppressing its cause, and bound to do the evil bidding of a blind, disastrous, and suicidal tyranny.

Into these details I have diverged unwillingly, from the direct line of historical narration, but, for the general reader, I trust, not unprofitably. Unaccompanied by a brief exposition of the backward state of Mexico, the events I have to record would, to persons remote from the sphere of their occurrence, wear the aspect of romantic fiction. The key to the marvels of Texan history can only be obtained by a clear understanding of the social position and relations of the Mexicans, and the character of the strangers whom, when emancipated from Spanish thraldom, they invited to settle on their soil. To rightly estimate the conduct, career, and prospects of a nation, as of an individual, it is requisite to be acquainted with the nature

of its education and the extent of its acquirements. It were equally futile to expect the practical development of an enlightened polity from a long oppressed, demoralized, and uninstructed people, as to hope for a judicious household economy under the domestic rule of a neglected nursling.

CHAPTER III.

Effect of Bonaparte's seizure of the Spanish Crown upon the Hispano-American Colonies—Insurrection in Mexico, headed by Hidalgo—Morelos—Central Junta at Zitaquaro—Congress of Chilpanzingo—Constitution of Apatzingan—Dissolution of Congress by Teran—Conciliatory measures of the Viceroy Apodaca, and their effects—Entrance of American Volunteers into Texas, under Guttierez, in 1812—Their achievements—Battle of the Medina, and treachery of the Mexicans—Revolutionary establishment at Galveston—Lafitte the ex-Pirate—Expedition of Xavier Mina—Attempt of General Long—Lallemand's settlement on the Trinity—Plan of Iguala—First Mexican Cortes—Iturbide proclaimed Emperor—His Abdication—Federal Constitution of 1824.

THE separation of its American provinces from Spain had been agitated by Colonel Burr and others several years previous to the period of "the Conspiracy." In 1796 Burr explained his opinions generally on the subject to Governor Jay. In 1797-8 General Miranda, a native of Caraccas, then in the United States, endeavoured to obtain the co-operation of a number of distinguished Americans, for a scheme of revolution, in which he hoped for the naval and pecuniary aid of Great Britain—commercial and political reasons combining to render the ministry of the time favourable to the independence of Spanish America. The expedition fitted out by Miranda in 1806, and the British ex-

pedition against Buenos Ayres in 1807, proved alike abortive. The event which may be termed the indirect cause of the severance of the Spanish colonies from the mother-country was the seizure of the crown of Spain by Bonaparte, and its transference to his brother Joseph, in 1808. American reverence for royalty did not long survive Ferdinand's abdication of the throne..

The cession of the Spanish crown was presumed to include the colonies as the property of the sovereign. A decree of the Council of the Indies, confirmatory of the cession at Bayonne, transferred the American dominions of Spain to King Joseph, and French agents were despatched to the colonies to announce the change of sovereignty to the viceroys, and through them to the people, and to demand their allegiance. With the exception of Don José Yturrigaray, viceroy of Mexico, all the representatives of Spanish royalty, with the great majority of the European Spaniards, whose predominant motives were hatred of the Creoles and attachment to place, appeared acquiescent in the change of dynasty. By the Creoles, on the contrary, the new demand of allegiance was received with indignation: they deposed their perjured chiefs, publicly burnt Bonaparte's proclamations, and with cries of "Long live Ferdinand VII." expelled the emissaries of France from the soil.

Yturrigaray, the Mexican viceroy, at this season of difficulty and danger, in compliance with the prayer of a memorial from the municipality of the capital, proposed calling a Junta, in order to adopt a provisional government capable of securing ge-

neral confidence. The European Spaniards, dreading the influence which the Creoles might gain by a popular system of rule, determined on effecting the viceroy's removal. Privately arming themselves, they arrested Yturrigaray and his lady, on the night of the 15th of September, 1808, and committed the latter to a nunnery, and the former to the prisons of the Inquisition.

A popular revolt against the authority of Bonaparte in Spain had previously led to the formation of Juntas in the different provinces of the Peninsula. The dissensions which arose from the contending claims of these bodies subsequently induced the establishment of a Central Junta, which assumed the supreme national authority. Victory, however, having attended the arms of France, the Central Junta was dispersed, and some of its members, taking refuge in the Isle of Leon, nominated a government of three persons, which received the name of the Regency of Cadiz. By this partially constituted regency, Don J. Vanegas, a person obnoxious to the Creoles, was appointed successor to Yturrigaray in the Mexican viceroyalty.

The principle of repulsion on which Spain governed her colonies is strikingly apparent in the conduct of the various factions that alternately prevailed in the Peninsula. The Central Junta in 1809; the Regency of Cadiz; the Cortes of 1812 and 1820; the restored King Ferdinand; all—however opposed in other matters—were of one sentiment with respect to American administration. The insulting, arbitrary, and exclusive system of rule was to be upheld at every hazard.

In 1810 the agitation widely developed in Mexico, by the news of the captivity of the King and the occupation of Madrid by the French, soon after the arrival of the viceroy, Vanegas, who honoured and rewarded the conspirators against Yturrigaray, was secretly concentrated in support of a plan of insurrection. The viceroy, having received intimation of the plot, issued orders for the arrest of the principals, who, for self-protection, were obliged to act prematurely. The standard of revolt was raised by an ecclesiastic.

Don Miguel Hidalgo Castilla, the rectoral *cura* of Dolores, a town in the Intendency of Guanaxuato, with a population consisting principally of Indians, had won the attachment of his flock by his popular qualities, and his endeavours to ameliorate their condition. He had made arrangements for the cultivation of silk, and had planted vineyards, when a special order, prohibitory of his labours, was issued from the capital. Proscribed by Vanegas, he was joined by three friends, Allende, Aldana, and Abasolo, captains in a cavalry regiment stationed in a neighbouring town. In conjunction with them, he took the field, in September 1810, for "the defence of religion and the redress of grievances." His first attempts were crowned with success. On the 29th of September he captured the city of Guanaxuato, containing a population of 80,000 souls, and recruited his military chest with public funds amounting to five millions of dollars in specie and bar silver. Having declared for the abolition of the Indian tribute, his ranks were swelled by large reinforcements of that people.

After remaining long enough at Guanaxuato to organise and equip his disorderly levies, he marched to Valladolid, which he entered on the 17th of October, and was hailed with joyous acclamations. After receiving fresh and large supplies of money, and adopting various measures for improving the efficiency of his army, he advanced towards the capital, and on the 28th reached Toluca, distant from it about thirty-six miles.

To arrest the progress of the insurgents, Vanegas sent his *aid-de-camp*, Colonel Truxillo, at the head of a corps of fifteen hundred men, which was afterwards increased to two thousand. Dislodged from his position, Truxillo was obliged to retreat towards the city of Mexico, where there were but two thousand royal troops amidst a malcontent population. Had Hidalgo, at the moment of alarm among the royalists, and of exultation among his own adherents, advanced boldly against the capital, it is hardly possible that he could have failed of success.

Contrary to advice dictated by the superior military foresight of Allende, he made a sudden and unaccountable retreat, after remaining two or three days within sight of Mexico. His subsequent career was a series of disasters. Defeated by the royalists under the sanguinary Calleja, at Aculco, Guanaxuato, and Guadalaxara, Hidalgo escaped with his principal officers, and fled towards the Eastern Internal Provinces, with the intention, it was supposed, of proceeding to the United States. He reached a place called Acatila de Bajan, near Saltillo, where he was treacherously delivered up to the enemy by a former partisan, in whom he had placed the greatest

confidence. He was taken to Chihuahua, in the Intendency of Durango, and shot, with all the companions of his flight, among whom was his friend Allende. Thus perished in 1811 the first Mexican revolutionary leader. From this year, the attainment of independence on the one side, and the re-establishment of the old system of misrule on the other—whatever might be their respective temporary professions—were the real ends contemplated by the insurgent colonists and the adherents of Spain.

Hidalgo injured and disgraced the cause which he espoused by appealing to the worst passions of his Indian confederates, who committed the most frightful excesses, slaughtering every European Spaniard that fell into their hands, and frequently not sparing the Creoles. These cruelties were adduced to palliate the ferociously vindictive outrages perpetrated by the royalist troops, and had the effect of terrifying and alienating a large proportion of the timid and wealthy Creoles, who were naturally favourable to the emancipation of the colonies from European thraldom. But Calleja, the Spanish commander, eclipsed Hidalgo as much in the details of cold-blooded massacre as in the practice of war. To avoid the waste of powder and ball, he cut the throats of the defenceless populace of Guanaxuato, until the principal fountain of the city literally overflowed with gore.* Yet it ought not to be forgotten that the failure of the first revolutionists may, in a great measure, be ascribed to their gratuitous acts of violence and inhumanity.

A partisan warfare ensued after the death of

* Robinson's Mexican Revolutions.

Hidalgo, productive of partial advantages to the insurgents, whose principal leaders were Don y Rayon, a lawyer, Don N. Villagran, and last, not least, the warlike priest, Don José Maria Morelos. But the Independents were destitute of any centre of union, of European aid, of financial system and military skill; all of which were possessed by their opponents. To connect himself and his fellows in arms with the people by a representative head, Rayon conceived the idea of establishing a National Junta. In accordance with his views, a Junta, or central government, was elected by the inhabitants of Zitaquaro, and installed in office. This body nominally acknowledged the authority of King Ferdinand, and published their edicts in his name; and ten years later, its ostensible principles formed the basis of Iturbide's famous "Plan of Iguala."

I gladly escape from a recital of the events that occurred from the establishment of the Central Junta (which did not realize the hopes of its founders) to the assembling of the first Mexican Cortes. During that interval, Morelos and Calleja had alternate mastery in the field of carnage and desolation, but the Spanish army having been powerfully reinforced and Calleja appointed viceroy, Morelos, to revive the spirits of his party, convened a Cortes, consisting of forty members, which opened its session at Chilpanzingo, ninety miles south of the city of Mexico. The Cortes afterwards removed to Ario, one hundred and thirty-five miles from the capital, where it declared Mexico independent, and constituted an executive, composed of Morelos, Liceaga, and Cos, with Morelos as President.

Defeated at Valladolid, Morelos lost at Pescuero his most active lieutenant, Matamoros (also originally a priest), who was captured and shot, together with seven hundred of his men. Other reverses followed, and the Cortes, driven from Chilpanzingo, was forced to seek refuge in the woods of Apatzingan, where, on the 22nd of October, 1814, it sanctioned the constitution known by that name. At this place, the assembly was nearly surprised in 1815, by the royalists under Iturbide. Unable to maintain himself in the Intendency of Valladolid, Morelos, with the representative body and a large portion of the inhabitants, determined to retire to Tehuacan in La Puebla. On his march thither, the insurgent chief was unexpectedly attacked on the 5th of November, 1815, and captured after a short conflict. He was carried to Mexico, deprived, like his precursor Hidalgo, of his clerical orders, treated with the greatest brutality, and shot in the back, as a traitor, in the village of San Christoval, eighteen miles from the capital, on the 22nd of December. About the same period, the Cortes, which had sustained a grievous loss by the capture of the executive chief, was forcibly dissolved on the 15th of December, 1815, by Don Miguel Teran, an officer whom it had provoked, it was alleged, by refusing to place him in the vacant Presidency, and intriguing to deprive him of his command.

The spirit of the revolution now began to decline. Fresh troops arrived from the Peninsula, and Calleja was succeeded in the viceroyalty by Don Juan R. de Apodaca, who substituted clemency for terror as the principle of his government. By the adoption of a

conciliatory policy, and the judicious distribution of pardons from the king, the new viceroy succeeded in reducing the number of armed insurgents to an insignificant amount.

During the progress of the occurrences in the southern Intendencies, of which the preceding is a faint and rapid outline, an attempt was made to effect a diversion in Texas, favourable to Morelos and his cause.

Near the close of the year 1812, Don José Alvarez de Toledo, who had been a representative of Mexico in the Spanish Cortes, arrived in the United States, and in conjunction with Don Bernardo Guttierez, then at Washington in the capacity of agent from the Mexican revolutionary authorities, devised a plan for invading the Eastern Internal Provinces of New Spain, by the aid of American auxiliaries. The ostensible command devolved upon Guttierez, as a Mexican, but the real conduct of the enterprise was intrusted to Colonel Magee, who, for the purpose of undertaking it, resigned his commission as lieutenant in the United States army, in which he had rendered efficient service, when detached from the post at Natchitoches, against a gang of marauding outlaws that infested the "Neutral Territory" between the Sabine and the Arroyo Hondo. Among the officers who joined the expedition, were Kemper, Lockett, Perry, and Ross, brave and ardent spirits, to whom the excitement of military adventure was irresistibly attractive. In a short time the invading force mustered about two hundred strong, all of them in the season of youthful daring, and mostly the sons of respectable settlers in Kentucky, Ten-

nessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana. At the head of this small but resolute band, augmented by recruits of an inferior description, French, Italians, and Spaniards, Magee planted his standard in Texas, and issued a proclamation in Spanish, in the name of Guttierez, inviting the Mexicans to join his ranks.

On their straggling march to the place of rendezvous, the advanced guard of the Americans was suddenly confronted by a body of royalist troops, who fled on the first fire, and were pursued to Nacogdoches, where Magee halted to obtain reinforcements and military stores. Intelligence of his first success having reached the South Western States, his army was increased by volunteers until it numbered about five hundred men. Instead of advancing towards Bexar, as the Spaniards anticipated, he proceeded towards the fortified town of La Bahia or Goliad, and occupied it without resistance on the 1st of November, 1812.

On the 7th of November, the royalists, in number nearly 2000, appeared before the place, commanded by the same Salcedo and Herrera who had indulged in the harmless flourish of trumpets with Wilkinson on the Sabine. Skirmishing immediately commenced, and was renewed from day to day, with little detriment to either side. On the 15th a steady fire from three eighteen-pounders was opened on the fort, the prelude to a regular and vigorous assault, which terminated in the utter discomfiture of the besiegers. Despairing of success in this way, the royalists hoped to reduce the garrison by cutting off supplies, and accordingly invested the place for a regular siege. It may readily be surmised that

the commissariat of the Americans was in no very satisfactory state; their stock of provisions was soon exhausted, there was no mode of procuring any except by the sword, and for three months of winter not a ration was consumed in the fort that was not, like the water of Bethlehem which David longed for, snatched by valour in presence of the foe. Thus matters continued until the 9th of February, 1813, when the royalists obtained some reinforcements. Colonel Magee having died, the command devolved upon Colonel Kemper, who resolved to remain no longer on the defensive. Although the Spaniards out-numbered the Americans in the proportion of five to one, the latter met them in open field, on the 10th of February. The engagement was decisive; after a conflict of several hours, the Spaniards, routed at every point, fled, leaving between three and four hundred of their number dead, whilst of the victors only two were killed and thirty wounded. These facts are stated on the authority of one of the earliest settlers in Texas, who was through the whole of the campaign.

This success was followed by another of equal brilliancy. The royalists, having reunited their scattered forces, returned to their old position before Goliad, where they remained about ten days, and then decamped under cover of the night, taking the route for Bexar. A detachment sent in pursuit fell on their rear, and succeeded in capturing the baggage-mules, and leading them unmolested to the fort. The royalists continued their march until they reached the Salado creek, where they waited in ambuscade for the Americans, who were now on

the advance. On the 29th of March, having vainly tried to effect a surprise, the royalists were obliged to hazard an encounter on an open and beautiful plain. The force, commanded by Salcedo, amounted to 1200 men, with six pieces of artillery planted in the centre. Notwithstanding their numerical superiority and advantage of position, the issue was for them disastrous. A select corps of riflemen under Lockett shot down the Spanish artillerists, and seized the cannon; while Kemper on the right, and Ross on the left, soon routed the enemy's wings. About four hundred Spaniards were killed, a greater number wounded, and seventy-three taken prisoners. A large supply of military stores, with 1500 head of mules and horses, fell into the hands of the Americans, who had the additional good fortune of discovering and capturing a whole *caballada* amounting to 3000 more. Their loss in the engagement was only nine killed and twenty-five wounded.

Resuming his march, Kemper moved on to San Antonio de Bexar, and, making a demonstration before its walls, demanded an unconditional surrender of the city, which met with prompt compliance. Salcedo, Herrèra, and twelve other Spaniards of distinction, surrendered formally, which was quickly followed by the capitulation of the whole of the royalist troops, now reduced to eight hundred men. The latter were allowed to depart—the former were placed in close confinement, and treated, not as prisoners of war, but felons. On the 1st of April the Americans entered Bexar; on the 5th a new local administration was organised with

Don Bernardo Guttierez, the nominal generalissimo, as governor, assisted by a council of thirteen, all selected from among the Mexicans, with the exception of two from the American army—Masicote and Hale.

Before this ruling body, arose the question as to the disposal of the prisoners, and it was finally determined that they should be tried by court martial, and by one, the members of which were known to be personally and vindictively hostile to the accused. It was notorious that the result of such a mock trial must inevitably be a sentence of death. The court was held, and that sentence was pronounced, but not directly or openly executed, as the Mexicans dreaded the displeasure of the Americans, who had, on several occasions, evinced their horror at such barbarous sacrifices. Deception was resorted to for the accomplishment of a deed worthy of assassins. Under the pretence of sending the condemned to Matagorda, for the purpose of being shipped to Spain, the fourteen Spanish chiefs were removed from Bexar, and, when on the way, were conveyed to the cover of a convenient wood, from which they never emerged. The waters of a brook flowing red with blood revealed the story of their fate. So abhorrent was this atrocious proceeding to the feelings and principles of the Americans, that a considerable proportion of them (including Colonel Kemper and many of the best officers) immediately abandoned the service, and it was with difficulty any of their countrymen were persuaded to adhere to a cause stained by such enormities. Guttierez pleaded in extenuation of the base and

cruel act, that the persons thus disposed of had, in like manner, murdered some of his own relations and companions in arms.

The invading force, much reduced in numbers by the withdrawal of Kemper and his friends, remained inactive at Bexar, under the command of Colonel Ross, who had signalised himself at the Salado. The new leader became attached to a lady in the town, the daughter of a Mexican officer. On the 16th of June, the Royalist General, Elisondo, who had advanced unperceived, appeared within four miles of the place with 4500 men, and summoned the garrison to surrender. The Americans immediately repaired to their posts, in obedience to their Colonel, but no Mexican was visible, each having fled to his habitation, and left the streets deserted. While Ross was speculating on the probable cause of the mysterious disappearance of his allies, he was startled by a visit from his lady-love, who, hurrying into his presence, her bright eyes dim with tears, threw herself into his arms, and implored him to fly for life, as the Mexican troops had all along been apprised of the march of Elisondo, and had resolved to unite with him and the citizens of Bexar in a general massacre of the Americans. On receipt of this intelligence, Ross, satisfied of its truth, called a council of war, and urged upon his officers the necessity of commencing an immediate retreat; but the majority, uninfluenced by the seductions of a weeping Cleopatra, rejected the advice with ridicule, and determined, at every risk, to abide the issue on the spot. Ross himself, by no means deficient in courage, but more credu-

lous than became an *amateur* campaigner, left the town the same night,—retiring like a second Antony from Actium. Early on the following morning Colonel Perry was chosen to the command. At ten o'clock in the forenoon of the same day the Americans received a communication from Elisondo, stating that he would leave them at liberty to retire unmolested from Texas, provided they yielded up Guttierez and the other Mexicans who were implicated in the condemnation and slaughter of the fourteen Spanish prisoners. This proposition, and the contemptuous answer which it received, were openly proclaimed throughout the town; a general muster was called, and all capable of bearing arms, both Mexicans and Americans, prepared for battle. Impatient of delay, they advanced against the enemy, whom they confronted on the morning of the 18th, while celebrating matins on the eastern bank of the Alesan, four miles from Bexar. The royalists, unable to maintain their ground before a hot fire of artillery, were worsted and finally forced to fly with the loss of everything—Elisondo himself effecting his escape with difficulty. The proportion of killed and wounded on the respective sides was about the same as in preceding engagements.

Information of the massacre of the Spanish prisoners at Bexar having reached the United States, an effect was produced on the public mind very unfavourable to the insurgents in Texas. The odium that fell upon Guttierez, who was deemed the prime abettor of the murderous act, led to his removal from the supreme command, and to the appointment of General Toledo. The insurrection-

ary force was divided into two bodies—400 Americans, under Kemper, who had returned from the United States, and resumed the duties of his post—and the Mexicans, about 700 strong, under Manchaca, a bold, but rude and uneducated, native partisan. Toledo, of a distinguished Spanish family and soldierly demeanour, was sufficiently acceptable to the Americans, but was regarded with jealousy and dislike by Manchaca and the Mexicans, who murmured at being under the orders of a "Gachupin,"* one of a race against whom they were waging a war that admitted of no compromise. The alienation of so large a portion of the combined forces from the Commander-in-chief was an ill omen for the result of their joint operations.

An occasion for action ere long arrived. The defeat of the royalist troops in Texas had imparted a formidable appearance to the progress of revolt in that quarter, and awakened the Spanish authorities to the necessity of adopting more vigorous measures to retrieve their losses. Soon after Toledo had assumed the command and reorganized the army, intelligence was received of the approach of Arredondo, Captain General of the Eastern Internal Provinces, at the head of a force, estimated (I should say, overestimated) at 10,000 men. To ensure success to this expedition, troops had been drawn from Vera Cruz, and united with the veterans of the interior. Advancing towards the Medina, Arredondo halted at a lake about six miles westward of that river,

* The word "*Gachupin*" has been variously interpreted, but it is universally used by the Creoles and Indians as a term of contempt. By the latter it is understood to signify "thief."

where he took up a position, which he endeavoured to strengthen by all the means at his disposal.

Toledo quitted Bexar for the purpose of giving battle, and on the 16th of June, 1813,* he confronted the enemy on the margin of the Medina. Arredondo had divided his force, advancing with one-half and four pieces of cannon, and leaving the other moiety in reserve at his fortified position on the lake. In the army of the insurgents, the principal officers were at issue as to the propriety of crossing the river. Toledo was of opinion that they should feign a retreat, for the purpose of luring the royalists over to the eastern bank. This stratagem was opposed by the fiery valour of Kemper, whose arguments ultimately prevailed. Crossing the stream, the Americans pressed onward with their accustomed intrepidity, the enemy yielding ground and retreating, but in good order. For three miles the royalists continued to retire in this manner, when a rapid and vigorous onset caused them to break into a flight, in which they abandoned their cannon. Toledo, conceiving that the ardour of his men was urging them too far from water, ordered the troops to fall back upon the Medina. This order was productive of discord and confusion among the officers, so much so, that Kemper and Manchaca, the colonels commanding, galloped violently down the lines, issuing contrary instructions and swearing

* I have discovered frequent discrepancies in the dates assigned by different authorities for this and other events of the Mexican Revolution. According to Robinson, the battle of the Medina was fought on the 18th of August, 1813. The date in the text is given on the manuscript authority of General Lamar, President of Texas.

that there should be no retreat. Toledo, unpopular with the Mexicans, was disobeyed, the action recommenced, and the enemy, closely pressed, retired, fighting and without confusion, until they reached their intrenchments. Here, to the astonishment of Kemper and Manchaca, a most destructive fire was opened by the entire force of Arredondo, whose great superiority of strength was now manifest. Utterly dismayed, the Mexicans fled at the first volley. Toledo, in forming his line of battle, had disposed the Mexicans and Americans in alternate companies; the flight of the former disorganised the latter, yet they flinched not from the contest, but fought with a desperation proportioned to the emergency of the occasion. So gallantly did they acquit themselves, that the Spanish cavalry was broken, and Arredondo commenced preparations for a retreat. At this critical moment, Colonel Musquiez, a traitor from the Mexican ranks, rode over to the royalists and informed them that the Americans were beaten, and that, fainting from want of water, they were unable to sustain another determined charge. Arredondo, on hearing this, rallied his cavalry, and with some of his freshest companies, made a furious rush upon the Americans, who were compelled to yield ground. Thinned in numbers — their ammunition spent — wearied with the struggle, and parched by a burning sun — their defeat was now certain. The work of slaughter commenced, and most of those who escaped from the battle-field were slain or captured on their flight towards Louisiana. The recreant Mexicans, who had deserted their own flag in the hour of

peril, sustained but little loss; while some Coshatta Indians, who were in the action, stood by the Americans to the last, and shared their fate. The bones of the dead were to be seen for several years afterwards, bleaching on the San Antonio road. In 1822 Colonel Don José Felix Trespalacios, governor of Texas, had the sculls collected and interred with military honours.

The revolutionary struggle in Texas may be said to have ended with the battle of the Medina, which, but for Mexican treachery, would have terminated in a victory that, by drawing fresh adventurers from the United States, would, in all probability, have greatly accelerated the independence of New Spain. General Toledo, who escaped to the United States, afterwards declared that, with 2000 such men as the Americans he commanded at Bexar, he could have marched to the city of Mexico.

The calamities of civil war were severely felt in the scattered and feeble settlements of Texas. In 1806 the colonists of the province reckoned more than 100,000 head of horned cattle, and from 40,000 to 50,000 tame horses. But an irruption of the Indians, in 1810, swept away the greater part of these herds, and desolated the establishments situated at a distance from the garrisoned towns.* After the defeat of the insurgents on the Medina, the principal inhabitants of Bexar were obliged to leave their homes in "the land of flowers," and seek protection across the Sabine.

The din of insurrectionary strife ceased on the plains of Texas, during the five years subsequent

* Almonte.

to the defeat and dispersion of the force under Toledo, in the summer of 1813. In 1815 proceedings were instituted in the district court of the United States for Louisiana, against General Toledo, Dr. John Robinson, and others, for violating, or attempting to violate, the neutrality of the Republic in aid of the governments of the United Provinces of New Granada, and of the United Provinces of Mexico. The vigilance of the authorities preventing expeditions on a large scale, adventurers from the United States occasionally passed to and from Texas—some to try their fortune in the war, others returning after it had been made or marred. As a means of lessening the resources of Spain, and recruiting their own, the agents and partisans of the Mexican revolutionists resorted to the system of nautical brigandage, which is covered by the specious name of privateering. To carry on this profitable branch of warfare with the due formalities, suitable points were selected on the coast of Texas for accommodating privateers cruizing under the Mexican flag, and disposing of their prizes before a Court of Admiralty. Galveston, called also San Luis, and by some Snake, Island, besides being the centre of these operations, afforded a convenient rendezvous for foreign expeditions in aid of the Revolution.

At the period when the star of Morelos seemed to be in the ascendant, and the prospects of the insurgents steadily brightening, the Revolutionary Cortes appointed Don José Manuel de Herrera (a priest), an agent of the embryo Republic in the United States. From Herrera, who chiefly resided

at New Orleans, Commodore Aury, a naval adventurer of French origin, received a commission as governor of the Province of Texas, and general in the Mexican Republican army. In his capacity of governor, Aury took formal possession of Galveston Island, at that time a desert, without maritime intercourse, and with no habitations of any kind, except three or four cabins built of boards and sails of vessels. The object and character of the occupation is thus described by the Collector of Customs at New Orleans, in a letter addressed to Mr. Crawford, secretary of the Treasury of the United States, dated August 1st, 1817:—

"I deem it my duty to state that the most shameful violations of the Slave Act, as well as our revenue laws, continue to be practised with impunity by a motley mixture of freebooters and smugglers, at Galveston, under the Mexican flag, being, in reality, little less than the re-establishment of the Barrataria band, somewhat more out of the reach of justice. * * * * * The establishment was recently made there by a Commodore Aury, with a few small schooners from Aux Cayes, manned, in a great measure, with refugees from Barrataria, and mulattoes."

For the information of the European reader, in whose mind the name of Barrataria is perhaps associated exclusively with the government of Sancho Panza, a short explanation of the Collector's allusion may be desirable. Near the lake of Barrataria, which communicates with the Mississippi, and lies about sixty miles westward of its mouths, are some islands which were frequented by fishermen

only, until they were seized on by a band of pirates headed by a man named Lafitte. In audacious courage and sleepless activity, this modern corsair rivalled the buccaneers who, a century before, plied their calling in the Mexican Gulf. Lafitte and his associates respected no flag, not even that of the neighbouring States, whose territory they infested. In the course of two years, more than 100 merchant ships became their prey. After pillaging their cargoes and murdering the crews, they burnt the vessels—keeping the commerce of those seas in constant alarm. The co-operation of Lafitte, valuable from his local knowledge, was requested by the English commander on this station, in aid of the expedition against New Orleans, in August, 1814. The pirate and his band, in which were a number of Louisianians, refused to join a foreign invader; but the government of the State, ignorant of the patriotic dispositions of the Barratarians, despatched a flotilla against them, expelled them from their hold, and captured their vessels and stores. Lafitte afterwards obtained the pardon of the Federal government for himself and his associates, by forwarding to the governor of Louisiana the originals of his correpondence with the British officers.*

The Collector proceeded to state that Colonel Perry (who commanded the Americans in Texas, after the secession of Ross), was, in this new community, the leader of between eighty and ninety men, who had been enlisted, principally as soldiers, within the jurisdiction of the United States; and

* *Barbé Marbois Hist. &c. de la Louisiane.*

that Herrera, with a few followers from New Orleans, brought up the rear, and "announced the establishment to the world by a proclamation attested by a Frenchman by the name of Morin, very recently a bankrupt auctioneer in New Orleans, as Secretary of State." After noticing the captures of vessels, "chiefly Spanish," by their numerous cruizers, which were condemned as prizes by a "pretended Court of Admiralty" at Galveston, he adds—"There is no evidence of the establishment having been made or sanctioned by, or connected with a Mexican Republic, if one be now existing"—which he greatly doubted—both from the bad character of the establishment in question, and its "ambulatory nature;" it having been transferred to Matagorda about the 5th of April, leaving only an advice boat at Galveston, "to advertise such privateers and prizes as might arrive there, of the spot on which they had fixed their new residence." It appears that, after the withdrawal of the authority of whose genuineness the Collector was sceptical, the island acquired a reputation by no means doubtful, being actually occupied as a rendezvous by Lafitte and a number of his old comrades—the pardoned "freebooters" of Barrataria, who formed a government of their own, "without even the semblance of authority from the Mexican Republic," and proceeded by virtue of "the good old rule" of their craft, to introduce vessels and cargoes into the port, and condemn them as lawful prizes.*

The fiscal vexations and perplexities of the Col-

* State Papers and Public Documents of the United States, vol. xi.—Boston, 1819.

lector, probably caused him to pronounce an over-rigorous and sweeping judgment upon the original establishment at Galveston. Whatever measure of delinquency might in justice be apportioned to Aury and his privateering companions, there were others who sojourned for a season on the island, whose integrity was above reproach. Of these, the most remarkable was Xavier Mina, who arrived off the coast of Texas on the 24th of November, 1816.

Mina, when he landed at Galveston, was entering upon his twenty-seventh year. Of a respectable family of Navarre, he relinquished his studies in the university of Saragossa, in 1808, and joined, as a volunteer, the ranks of his countrymen who had risen against the French. His services as a *guerilla* leader in the fastnesses of his native mountains, obtained for him the rank of Captain General of Navarre and Upper Aragon. In the winter of 1811, while engaged in a special enterprize near Pampeluna, he was taken by the enemy, after a bloody and obstinate contest, in which he fell exhausted by many wounds. The Navarrese selected his uncle Espoz y Mina to succeed him, and his achievements fully justified the choice. The captured chief was removed to Paris, and imprisoned in the castle of Vincennes, where, under the direction of some veteran officers—captives, like himself—he applied closely to the study of military science. He remained in confinement until the general peace consequent upon the abdication of Napoleon.

After the restoration of King Ferdinand, the

Minas, as the supporters of liberal principles, soon fell under the royal displeasure. The malignant activity of the government caused them, without due preparation, to proclaim the Cortes and the Constitution. The attempt being unsuccessful, Xavier Mina withdrew to France, and was imprisoned near Bayonne: being liberated, he passed over to England, where he was hospitably received. Through the medium of a friendly British nobleman, he made the acquaintance of General Scott, of the United States Army, then in this country, and was furnished with a ship, arms, and military stores, by persons favourable to his views, to enable him to assist in emancipating Mexico. With this object before him, he sailed from England for the Chesapeake, in May, 1816, accompanied by thirteen Spanish and Italian, and two English officers.

At Baltimore, Mina added an armed brig and a Spanish schooner to the expedition, procured arms, ammunition, and stores, and completed his corps, which included a large proportion of officers. On the 27th of September, he sailed for the rendezvous at Port au Prince. Having been detained at this port to refit a ship which had been dismasted by a hurricane, he made sail, on the 24th of October, for San Luis, or Galveston, Island, where he expected to find Commodore Aury, to whom he looked for useful co-operation.

The General having met with Aury, as he anticipated, disembarked the troops, and laid out an encampment to the westward of a mud fort, thrown up by the Commodore on the west side of Galves-

ton. Active preparations were commenced for organising and equipping the troops, who were supplied with abundant rations by the revolutionary marine. Skeleton regiments were formed, in the expectation that they would be speedily filled up after making the descent, and officers were appointed to the different corps. The American officers, who did not understand the Spanish language, were incorporated into a company commanded by Colonel Young, who had served with distinction in the army of the United States.

Unfortunately for the object of the expedition, Mina failed in securing the cordial assistance of Aury, who could have increased the infant army by between 300 and 400 men, whom he had raised for invading Texas. Of this force, Colonel Perry held the command of about 100, and, after a serious rupture with the Commodore, which had nearly terminated in bloodshed, he placed himself under the orders of Mina, who sailed from Galveston for Soto la Marina, on the river Santander, in the province of that name, on the 27th of March, 1817. The whole of the invading force on board the fleet, including sailors, mechanics, and servants, amounted to no more than 300 persons.

It was about this period that the Mexican revolutionary establishment was transferred from Galveston to Matagorda; the temporary erections on the Island having been burnt by Mina and Aury, and no authorities left to represent them or the government they served; facts which were afterwards officially notified by the Commodore to the Collector of Customs at New Orleans. Immediately after its

removal, the Lafittes, and other Barratarians, who owned several of the "Mexican" cruizers, convened a meeting at Galveston, and organised an insular administration, for the special purpose of introducing their lawless captures into the state of Louisiana, to the extreme annoyance of the district Collector, who explained his embarrassments in the following terms:—"On the part of these pirates we have to contend with, we behold an extended and organised system of enterprise, of ingenuity, of indefatigability, and of audacity, favoured by a variety of local advantages, and supported always by force of arms: and unless they be met by correspondent species of resistance, the results of the contest are of very simple calculation.'

The mode in which the buccaneer government was founded, is detailed on oath by John Ducoing, "ex-Judge of Admiralty," at Galveston, under Barratarian sway, and Raymond Espanol, a trading adventurer, and "Secretary of State" within the same jurisdiction;—

"After the departure of Mina and Aury," declares Señor Espanol, "on the 15th of April, 1817, the persons then at Galveston consisted of about thirty or forty in number, including sailors, &c., six of whom assembled on board of the schooner Carmelita, to wit: Durieux, John Ducoing, Pereneau, B. Lafon, Rousselin, Jean Jannet, and the deponent, who formed the new government. The proceedings were drawn up and signed by those present, by which certain of the persons aforesaid took upon themselves offices, namely, Durieux, Governor and Military Commandant; John Ducoing, Judge of

Admiralty; Raymond Espanol, Notary Public, Secretary of State and Treasury; Pereneau, *Major du Place;* Rousselin, Administrator of Revenue; Jean Jannet, Marine Commandant. No paper or document was produced, authorising the same, or empowering them to form a government."—It is set forth in the register of the proceedings, that "not being able, under existing circumstances, to obtain a seal of state, its place will be supplied by a common one, until an official one can be procured."

The government thus summarily established had, it is proved, no connexion whatever with any other state, nation, or people;—they had "neither knowledge nor belief in the existence of a Mexican Republic: the sole object and view of the persons comprising the establishment at Galveston, were to capture Spanish property under what they called the Mexican flag, but without an idea of aiding the revolution in Mexico," or replenishing any treasury save their own. Such was the testimony of the Barratarian Admiralty Judge and Secretary of State, given in the United States District Court for Louisiana, which was illiberal enough to annul the proceedings of the Galveston cabinet.*

* Although M. Aury repudiated his self-elected successors in the government of Galveston, it is evident, that the Commodore did not rank much higher in the opinion of the New Orleans collector, than the imitators of his policy. Both were concerned in the smuggling of negroes into Louisiana, which the government cruisers and revenue officers found it extremely difficult to prevent, owing to the numerous inlets between the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi. A number of Frenchmen served with Aury, but, according to an official correspondent of the United

The mouth of the river Santander, where Mina proposed to disembark his troops, is very narrow, and obstructed by a bar, which excludes vessels drawing more than six feet of water. The village of Soto la Marina stands upon an elevation on the left bank of the river, about sixty miles from the *embouchure*. This village was occupied by the invaders without opposition. The first advantage gained over the royalists, on the field, was achieved by Colonel Perry, who commanded the American Regiment of the Union.

Mina having received intelligence that Don Joaquim Arredondo, Captain-general of the Eastern Internal Provinces, was concentrating all his disposable forces for an overwhelming attack, decided on erecting a fort, for the protection of his stores, at Soto la Marina, and then penetrating by rapid marches into the interior, where he hoped to form a junction with the insurgents. The fort was completed, armed, and provisioned, and the part of the division destined for the advance was posted on the right bank of the river.

Colonel Perry, who had for some time appeared capricious and discontented, now declared his intention to separate from Mina, and return to the United States; avowing his conviction that the division, too weak to accomplish anything of importance, would encounter certain destruction. Influenced by Perry's representations, fifty-one of his

States Treasury, "his great dependence was on about one hundred and thirty brigand negroes—a set of desperate bloody dogs." When this was written the Commodore was at Amelia Island, off the Florida coast.

corps, including Major Gordon and the rest of the officers, quitted the camp with him, and commenced their march in the direction of Matagorda. No one believed it possible that Perry could traverse the long line of intervening country, with so small a company, opposed as he would be, by the royalist troops and numerous tribes of Indians. But, to the general astonishment, he did make good his way, contesting every league of ground until he reached the scene of his former exploits, the town of La Bahia, not far from Matagorda. At this place he fought his last battle, and, in proportion to the numbers engaged in it, the bloodiest on record. Flushed by his victorious progress, he had resolved on attacking this strong position, although he had been unmolested by the garrison, but, at the moment when the Spanish commandant was deliberating on the summons to surrender, a party of two hundred royalist cavalry appeared. Encouraged by the reinforcement, the garrison sallied out against the Americans, and the action was maintained until every man of the band was killed except the leader. He, when all hope of the day was gone, retreated to a neighbouring tree, and presenting a pistol to his head, fell by his own hand rather than surrender to the foe. Perry, who, whatever might be his faults, possessed a dauntless spirit, had served in the army of the United States, and was present at the battle of New Orleans. In the disastrous affair at the Medina, he had a hair-breadth escape, and suffered extreme hardships and privations before he reached the United States.

The successful progress of Mina with his scanty

numbers was extraordinary; the greatest strength of the division during its advance from the coast to the interior, presenting a total of only 308, including officers, soldiers, and servants. His first collision with the enemy was on the 8th of June, 1817, at Valle de Mais, where he routed a body of cavalry 400 strong. At Peotillos, on the 14th of the same month, with 170 fatigued infantry and badly mounted cavalry, he defeated, in a plain, upwards of 1,700 men; his loss, however, in killed and wounded amounted to fifty-six. The Spanish order of the day which was found upon the field, expressly forbade quarter. On the 18th, he stormed without loss the fortified town of Real de Pinos, in Zacatecas, containing a garrison of three hundred men. On the 24th, he reached Sombrero, where he was welcomed by a revolutionary corps, having effected a circuitous march of 660 miles in thirty-two days. His division on arriving at Sombrero, amounted to 269 men, rank and file. From this place he made a formal offer of his services to the Revolutionary Junta.

Whilst stationed in this quarter, Mina went in quest of the royalists, whom he defeated, reducing likewise the Hacienda of Jaral, where he found much treasure. To counterbalance these advantages, Arredondo captured the fort at Soto la Marina; Sombrero also was invested by the royalists, and the garrison, unable to maintain it, were obliged to cut their way through the enemy to the head-quarters of another soldier priest, General, or Padre, Torres, who commanded at the fort of Remedios. On the 31st of August, the royalists, under General

Liñan, advanced and laid siege to Remedios, which Mina, checked by a very superior force, tried in vain to relieve. Unsuccessful in several desultory engagements, and unsustained by the insurgent leaders, the guerilla chief was ultimately surprised and captured by the Spanish General Orrantia at Venadito, on the 27th of September, 1817. By an order from the Viceroy Apodaca, Mina was shot at the head-quarters of Liñan before Remedios, on the 11th of November. So important an event was his death considered by the Spanish court, that the viceroy was honoured with the title of Count of Venadito, while Liñan and Orrantia obtained the decorations of a military order. The general, when cut off, was in his twenty-eighth year. He united the qualities of a gentleman and a soldier; his habits were simple, his feelings humane, his sentiments generous. In his external appearance there was nothing remarkable; he was about five feet seven inches in height, of a slight, but symmetrical, form. The failure of Mina's expedition was mainly attributable to insufficiency of means, the decline of the revolutionary spirit, and the jealousy of the insurgent chiefs, the ablest of whom were then inactive. Torres, the debauched priest, who held supreme authority at Remedios, secretly thwarted the young commander, whom he disliked from an uneasy sense of his superiority. Mina was, moreover, a "Gachupin," and advocated constitutional liberty without separation from Spain —circumstances which of themselves must have formed insuperable barriers to his retention of power among the Spaniard-hating Mexicans.

After the death of Mina, violent dissensions broke out among the insurgent leaders, who were never cordially united, until every town and fortress of note fell into the hands of the royalists. In 1819, the revolutionary cause was at the lowest ebb. Torres had surrendered to the government—Guerrero, Arago and Guadalupe Victoria were forced to seek refuge in the mountains. The viceroy declared, in a despatch transmitted about this time to the government at Madrid, that he would answer for the safety of Mexico without a single additional soldier. The restoration of the Spanish Cortes in 1820, produced an alteration equally sudden and complete. Before entering upon the consequences of that event, certain hostile movements that occurred in Texas during the year 1819 remain to be described.

A meeting convened for the purpose of organizing an expedition in aid of the revolutionary cause in Texas, was held at Natchez on the Mississippi in 1819. Of the enterprise then resolved upon, General Long was appointed leader. He started in June at the head of about seventy-five followers, who were increased upon the march until, when he reached Nacogdoches, they exceeded 300. The expedition proved unfortunate, the town of Nacogdoches was destroyed, and the whole of the inhabitants in the eastern part of Texas were driven by the Spanish troops across the Sabine.* Defeated on the Brazos and Trinity, Long collected the rem-

* "Many families took refuge near to Natchitoches, in the State of Louisiana, where they lived for some time on the hospitality of that generous people."—*Almonte.*

nant of his forces at Bolivar point, and departed for New Orleans, to obtain supplies and auxiliaries. With a view to raise pecuniary aid, Trespalacios, a Mexican general, was invited to the nominal command, who sailed with Colonel Milam for Vera Cruz, while Long prosecuted the war in Texas. He attacked and captured La Bahia, but, after three days' siege, was compelled to surrender it. By the perfidy of the Spanish commandant at Bexar, Long and his force, amounting to 180, were made prisoners, and after many adventures, conveyed to the city of Mexico. There General Long terminated his career, having been shot by a soldier, as he was entering a public office to settle some claims upon the government. His men were drafted into the Mexican service, and ultimately released and sent home to the United States, through the interference of Mr. Poinsett, the American envoy. To complete the narrative of events in Texas, previous to the separation of Mexico from Spain, it is requisite to notice a settlement formed on the Trinity River by emigrants from France.

Several military officers who had joined the banner of Napoleon after his return from Elba, to avoid an appearance before the tribunals, retired on the restoration of the Bourbons to the United States, where they were hospitably received. In 1817, a tract of 92,160 acres was assigned them, on terms almost equivalent to a gift, on the borders of Alabama, on condition of introducing there the culture of the vine and olive. Soldiers are rarely successful agriculturists, particularly when placed upon the uncleared lands of a new country: of

the settlers in Alabama some relinquished farming altogether, and others, though they quitted the locality of their grants, persisted in their original design.

Among the latter were Generals Lallemand and Rigaud, who with a small body of soldiers and labourers, in the hope of finding a country as attractive to them as *La Belle France*, turned their steps towards Texas, and advancing towards the interior beyond the Bay of Galveston, selected a post to which Lallemand gave the name of *Champ d'Asile*. The season was adverse, and the habits of the settlers not well adapted to their situation, but game was abundant, and they succeeded in establishing a petty traffic with the Indians, so that, encouraged by the prospect, Lallemand began to fortify the post, to prescribe regulations, and to invite other emigrants. An unforeseen obstacle arrested these proceedings. The Spanish authorities directing the exiled general to discontinue his endeavours or acknowledge the sovereignty of Ferdinand, marched against the settlement of *Champ d'Asile*, which, unable to resist, was broken up. "These unfortunate men," says Barbé Marbois, "fugitives from their own country, were expelled from a territory where the Aborigines had received them with hospitality, and which ought to have belonged only to those who were the first to occupy it beneficially."

The first revolutionary outbreak in Mexico was opposed by the higher orders of the clergy, and, for causes previously explained, but coldly regarded by the more opulent Creoles. The re-establishment of the Spanish Constitution, in 1820, having been fol-

lowed by some formidable inroads on the property and prerogatives of the Church, the Mexican hierarchy was moved to consider separation from the mother country as the only step by which its possessions and privileges could be secured from sacrilegious invasion, and a congenial retreat from his rebellious subjects provided for Ferdinand VII. With these views and impressions, they supplied funds to Don Augustin Iturbide, an ambitious Royalist officer of Creole birth, who, coalescing with his former opponents of the independent party under Guerrero, proceeded to the little town of Iguala, on the road to Acapulco, and on the 24th of February, 1821, proclaimed a project of separation, embracing the following propositions:—Mexican Independence of Spain;—the offer of the Crown of Mexico to Ferdinand, and, failing him, to the other members of the Royal Family in succession, on condition of residence in America, and fealty to the constitution to be established by the Cortes;—full security for the supremacy of the Roman Catholic faith, and the immunities of the clergy, regular and secular;—the abolition of all distinctions of classes, and the union of Spaniards, Creoles, Indians, Africans, and castes on the equal footing of free citizenship. For the support of this project—since celebrated as the Plan of Iguala—an army was to be raised, to be styled, "The Army of the Three Guarantees," to preserve the Holy Apostolic Catholic Religion, the independence of Mexico, and the union between the Spaniards in Mexico and the Americans of the South. The "Plan" was approved by the troops on the spot, who bound themselves to its support

by an oath. A new Viceroy, O'Donoju, arrived at Vera Cruz from Spain, and, finding it useless to contend against the general demonstration in favour of national independence, negotiated a treaty with Iturbide, which embraced the principal provisions of the plan of Iguala. It was called the Treaty of Cordova, from the place where it was adopted. Opposition was now arrested, the capital occupied, and a Provisional Junta installed, of which Iturbide was appointed President, for the purpose of making arrangements for assembling a National Convention, to frame a constitution for the new monarchy. The first Mexican Cortes met on the 24th of February, 1822, and the members, by their oaths and their votes, yielded an unanimous sanction to the Plan of Iguala.

The unanimity was short lived. The Cortes became divided into three factions:—the Bourbon monarchists, the Republicans, and the personal adherents of Iturbide. The last, adroitly manœuvring between the other two parties, and backed by the army, prevailed; and, on the 19th of August, "Augustin I., Emperor of Mexico," was proclaimed in the hall of the Cortes, by the united voices of the soldiers and the city rabble, amidst the brandishing of swords and knives. Had the elect of the tribune and the camp been guided by prudential considerations, he might, perhaps, have continued to maintain a modified authority; but, forgetting the unstable foundation of his throne, he attempted too early and too comprehensively to introduce the simplicity of Absolutism into the machinery of his administration. A law for the

establishment of military tribunals was indignantly rejected by the Cortes. Iturbide retaliated by imprisoning the most distinguished members of that body, and ultimately by proclaiming its dissolution, proposing, as a substitute, a Junta of his own nomination. The Junta, forty-five members of which were selected by the Emperor from the ranks of the disbanded Cortes, met in November, and acted as the ready echo of the imperial will. The republican standard was raised at Soto la Marina; the haughty dismissal by Iturbide of his former supporter, General Santa Anna, (Santaña) from the government of Vera Cruz, induced him to follow the example, and to announce a Plan for re-assembling the Cortes, and protecting its deliberations. He was joined by Victoria and Echavarri; Generals Bravo and Guerrero took the field on the same side. Disaffection spread throughout the provinces, part of the Imperial army revolted and published the Plan of Casa Mata; and, on the 19th of March, 1823, Augustin I. communicated to the Cortes his resignation of the Imperial Crown,—the assumption of which was decreed to be an act of violence, and null—and embarked, with his family and suite, for Leghorn, on the 11th of May.*

A temporary executive was appointed, consisting

* From Italy Iturbide proceeded to London, and made preparations for returning to Mexico; in consequence of which, Congress, on the 28th of April, 1824, passed a decree of outlawry against him. He landed in disguise at Soto la Marina, 14th July, 1824, was arrested by General Garza, and shot at Padilla, by order of the Provincial Congress of Tamaulipas, on the 19th of that month.

of Generals Victoria, Bravo, and Negrete, who were to administer the affairs of the country until a new constituent Cortes, which was immediately convoked, could be assembled. By this body, which entered upon its functions in August, 1823, the Federal Constitution of the Mexican Republic, modelled after the Constitution of the North American Union, was decreed on the 31st of January, 1824, and definitively sanctioned in October of the same year.*

The framers of this instrument proceeded upon the assumption that institutions the most free and enlightened may be successfully administered by and among an ignorant, indigent, and degraded people. Yet they were not altogether mere copyists of Washington and his compeers. Although the States adopted what is usually termed "Universal Suffrage"—conferring the franchise without distinction of colour or class—the voters were only empowered by the Constitution to choose "electoral colleges," by whom the representatives were to be selected. They neither introduced trial by jury, nor did they provide for publicity in the administration of justice. These omissions were palpable deviations from the great Northern model; but they ventured on another, which stamped the unequivocal sign of its Hispano-American origin on their Constitution. The third article decreed that—"The Religion of the Mexican nation is, *and will be perpetually*, the Roman Catholic Apostolic. The

* This document will be found in the Appendix, at the end of the work—No. I.

nation will protect it by WISE AND JUST LAWS, *and prohibit the exercise of any other whatever.*"

To forestall the consciences of posterity, and to coerce those of the existing generation, for the propitiation and aggrandisement of an intolerant and oppressive hierarchy, was the object of an elementary article in the Charter of mutual rights, framed by men who, after long struggling to be disenthralled, had but just emerged into the light of freedom, bearing fresh upon them the traces of their bondage!—Strange inconsistency!

The States and Territories included in the Federal Union were necessarily designated before the formal promulgation of the Constitution. A decree of the Constituent Cortes, dated the 7th of May, 1824, declared, that Texas should be annexed to Coahuila, until it possessed the elements necessary to the formation of a separate State, when, with the approval of the National Congress, the connexion was to be dissolved, and an independent State legislature given to Texas. The inviolability of the fundamental articles of the Constitutional compact was solemnly proclaimed by its framers, who, guarding against popular levity and legislative caprice, inserted this precautionary provision:—"The articles of the Constitution and the Constitutional Act, which establish the Liberty and Independence of the Mexican Nation, its Religion, form of Government, liberty of the Press, and *division of the Supreme Powers of the Federation, and of the States,* CAN NEVER BE REFORMED."

CHAPTER IV.

Intended Spanish Colony in Texas—Moses Austin—his origin, character, and pursuits—Spanish system of granting waste lands—Austin's project of colonising Texas—Journey to San Antonio and its results—Continuance of Moses Austin's enterprise by his son Stephen—Settlement of the first Colony on the Brazos—Difficulties respecting the concession—Stephen Austin's Visit to the City of Mexico—Delay occasioned by political changes—Ultimate confirmation of the grant—Internal affairs of the Colony—Empresario Grants.

During the long intervening period between the expedition of Alonzo de Leon in 1698, and the achievement of Mexican independence in 1821, it has been seen that no substantial advances were made towards the beneficial colonization of Texas. Apart from the politico-monastic character of the Spanish settlements, it was found that the Zamboes and other low castes who were detached to the north-eastern frontier of Mexico, were too lazy to cultivate the soil, and too cowardly to resist the aggressions of the Northern Indians, by whom they were plundered at will. The Mexican Creoles, disliking agriculture, and engaged in working the mines and raising stock, had no inducement to withdraw from safe and populous districts to a remote frontier province, in which two or three ill-defended posts barely extended the semblance of protection to the settlers residing in their immediate vicinity.

With a view to introduce a better system, or

more probably, to provide against apprehended encroachment, after the cession of Louisiana to the United States, the Spanish government projected the establishment of a European colony on the fertile lands that border the river San Marcos. The colony was to have consisted of 3,000 persons, natives of Old Spain, and an intelligent officer, General Grimarest, was chosen to undertake its direction. The expedition was on the point of sailing from Cadiz in 1804, when the capture of the four Spanish frigates off that port, in October of the same year, by Captain Moore, and the subsequent declaration of hostilities between Spain and England, rendered it impracticable. From the year 1810 to 1819, when the revolt in Mexico had been apparently suppressed, the spear superseded the ploughshare on the prairies of Texas, and barred the approach of the peaceful colonist.

By the treaty between Spain and the United States, concluded at Washington on the 22nd of February, 1819, East and West Florida, with the adjacent islands, were ceded to the latter, and the boundaries between the possessions of the two nations, west of the Mississippi, established as they were subsequently confirmed by a treaty of limits with the Mexican republic. The pretensions of the United States to Texas, as a part of Louisiana, having been finally disposed of by the stipulations of the Florida Treaty, the Spanish government was seemingly in a condition to offer satisfactory assurances to all persons desirous of obtaining grants of land westward of the Sabine. The first Anglo-American that availed himself of permission to in-

troduce a colony into Texas was Moses Austin, whose indomitable spirit of enterprise is eminently characteristic of the people from whom he sprang.

Moses Austin was a native of Durham in Connecticut, a New Englander, or, in facetious phrase, a "Yankee"—one of those intelligent and persevering "Scots" of the Union, who, reared in a naturally poor country, migrate to new and more promising regions in quest of independence, and show themselves deserving of success by their enlightened views and steady habits of industry and order. At a very early age Mr. Austin, impelled by a desire to enlarge both his experience and his means, left his native State and joined an extensive mercantile firm in Philadelphia, of which his brother Stephen was the head. In his twentieth year he married, in that city, Miss Maria Brown, a lady of superior mental endowments, and shortly afterwards removed to Richmond, in Virginia, for the purpose of extending the business of the house. After conducting this branch of the establishment for some years, in his own name, he purchased, jointly with his brother Stephen, the lead mines called Chessel's Mines, on New River, Wythe County, Virginia; and commenced the mining and manufacture of lead on an extensive scale. He was the first person who established a manufactory of shot and sheet lead in the United States, introducing the necessary miners and mechanics from England; and his elder brother was the first who fitted out a ship on a sealing voyage to the north-west coast of America, and thence to the East Indies and China, opening thereby an important branch of commerce.

Owing to causes beyond his control, the firm sustained overpowering reverses, and the speculation in Virginia disappointed his expectations. Receiving very favourable reports of the lead mines of Upper Louisiana (now Missouri), he resolved to explore that distant and then almost unknown country. Having procured the necessary passports from the Spanish Minister to the United States, he visited Upper Louisiana in 1799, and obtained from the Governor-General, Baron de Carondelet, a conditional grant of a league of land, including the Mine-a-Burton, since called Potosi, forty miles west of St. Genevieve. After winding up his affairs, he removed his family, with a number of others, from Wythe County, by a new and almost untried route, down the Kenhawa River, in 1799, and originated the settlement of the present county of Washington in Missouri. To comprehend the difficulties attendant on this undertaking, it is necessary to bear in mind that to Missouri improvement was, at that period, a stranger. From Louisville to St. Genevieve, between which points were embraced the present States of Indiana and Illinois, the whole tract was a wilderness, traversed by prowling savages only, with the exception of a few French settlers on the Wabash and Kaskaskia. The family of his nephew, Elias Bates, was the first, and his own the second, that ever spent a winter at Mine-a-Burton. Durham Hall, the seat which Mr. Austin raised in the uncultivated wilds, was for years the centre of the domestic virtues and an expanded benevolence. His upright character and public spirit won for its owner the affectionate

respect of the early settlers. Industry was considerately stimulated and generously rewarded under his influence, and the beautiful village of Herculaneum, springing up as if by magic, indicated the prosperity which had repaid the meritorious exertions of him who might be termed the genius of the place. Unhappily, the exercise of those qualities which were most honourable to his nature, was followed by a second ebb of his fortunes; yet, though declining in the vale of years, his native ardour and buoyancy of spirit were neither chilled nor depressed. In the hour of adversity he turned his eyes towards Texas, and organised a plan for drawing forth the neglected treasures of its exuberant soil by the introduction of Anglo-American labour.

An essential preliminary to the execution of his project, was the approval of the Spanish government, which he was advised to solicit through the authorities in New Spain. In the event of his application being successful, Mr. Austin contemplated the removal of a number of emigrant families in a body through Arkansas Territory. With this intention, his son, Stephen Fuller Austin, was sent to Long Prairie, on Red River, with the requisite hands and supplies for opening a farm near the boundary line, which might serve as a resting-place and depôt of stores, until arrangements for the reception of the settlers had been made in the land of their destination. Should the enterprise fail, it was calculated that the farm might be advantageously sold, or retained as a cotton plantation. In consequence of information collected on Red River

by the younger Austin, the scheme of the farm was abandoned. At a meeting between Stephen and his father at Little Rock, in Arkansas, in the summer of 1820, it was arranged that the former should proceed to New Orleans, and the latter to the capital of Texas. Stephen was commissioned to enter upon preparations for the transport of emigrants, and to be in readiness to quit New Orleans for the Havannah, should it ultimately be found necessary to appeal for permission to colonise, to the government in Spain.

Though unfortunate in his career of extensive commercial enterprise, Moses Austin was no dreaming projector, but a persevering man of thoroughly practical ideas. In selecting Texas as a field of speculation, he did not yield to the prompting of a spirit of romantic adventure. He had heard of the great natural advantages of the province from the Americans who had returned from the campaigns of 1812-13, and his residence in Upper Louisiana, from 1799 until the transfer of the country to France in 1803, had made him acquainted with the system that regulated the grant of lands in the Spanish colonies. This system was devised and controlled by the Council of the Indies, and owing to its inherent defects, but much more to general and local mal-administration, the territorial resources of the American possessions of Spain were squandered with the same disregard of economic results that has, until lately, been evinced in the appropriation of waste lands in the dependencies of Britain.

In the Spanish colonies, lands were conceded by

the Crown to all inhabitants, whether native or naturalised, who professed a desire to occupy and cultivate them; the only payment required being comprised in fees to the surveyor and the officers who drew up and registered the titles. The first step towards obtaining a grant was to present a petition to the governor, or sub-delegate, both of which offices were sometimes united in the same person. The authority addressed referred the petition to the surveyor, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the land applied for was vacant, and royal domain. From the surveyor it was passed to the Fiscal (legal adviser of the Crown), to decide upon the legality of the grant. If the lands prayed for were adjacent to a military post, lest their settlement should interfere with defensive operations, the chief engineer was consulted. When all these officers had reported favourably to the petitioner, the decree assigning the grant was made, and forwarded to the Intendant for confirmation.

According to the regulations, the extent of the grant was to be determined by the means of improvement possessed by the petitioner, and by the amount of his credit with the sub-delegate. One hundred *arpents* * were usually allotted to the heads of families, fifty to each child, and twenty-five to each slave. A favourite with the government might, however, be accommodated almost to the limit of his wishes, but a complete title was rarely bestowed until the grantee was capable of proving actual residence on the soil, with tillage or grazing

* An *arpent*, or French acre, is about four-fifths of an English acre.

use, for a specified term, which was usually ten years. For pasturage, fine lands were often granted to the extent of ten or fifteen thousand acres, and the premium for erecting a saw mill was sixteen thousand.

As an encouragement of every description of merit, and a reward of every species of service in peace and war, including not a few of a very dubious character, lands were prodigally distributed. When a petitioner proved that he had rendered services to the Crown, or sustained losses in its employment, or by its agents, or had pecuniary claims upon it, a grant of land was the ordinary mode of compensation. In such a case, the regular course was to file the audited account on the "protocol," endorsed as discharged by the grant, and the certificate of conveyance recorded the transaction. Spain, needy and improvident, was often unable to pay the salaries of her colonial officers, who, obliged to levy from the colonists irregular contributions for their maintenance, gave, as the only return in their power, what they might consider an equivalent in land.

In the disposal of Crown lands, the law required of the purchaser the same qualifications as of the grantee, and the regulations prohibited the sale of a larger quantity to the former than he might be competent to till or pasture. Lands were always sold, as wanted, at auction, a *minimum* price having been previously affixed by the Fiscal or his deputies.

A very slovenly system of management prevailed in the land offices. All grants were marked with the year in which they were made, and bound up in large bundles called protocols; but the

petitioner was subjected to much delay and expense in ascertaining whether the land he applied for was open to settlement. Through the blunders of the officer whose duty it was to determine the fact of occupancy, grants were occasionally surveyed on appropriated land; in which case, the remedy lay with the sub-delegate, who could authorise a survey on an unoccupied tract. When it happened that lands granted for agricultural purposes were found on trial to be unfit for tillage, the privilege of removal to a suitable location was conceded by the authorities on becoming legally satisfied of the circumstances.*

In the hope of concluding an arrangement on liberal terms with a government generally so profuse of its waste lands, Moses Austin departed on his long and dangerous journey to San Antonio de Bexar, to submit a petition to the provincial chief. But, in his calculation of difficulties, he had forgotten the prejudice which might be entertained against him as an Anglo-American. Early in December, 1820, he arrived at San Antonio, where, instead of being received with the attention he anticipated, he was treated as a suspicious intruder, and ordered to quit the province with all possible speed. In vain did he solicit a dispassionate hearing from the Governor, Don Antonio Martinez, concerning the business of his mission, or plead that, although without a passport, he had been a Spanish subject in Louisiana; the order for his departure was imperative, and he was peremptorily informed that he would continue to linger at his

* Williams's Florida, New York, 1837.

peril. Disappointed and disgusted, he retired from the Governor's house, to arrange for his return. In crossing the public square, he unexpectedly encountered an old acquaintance in the person of the Baron de Bastrop, one of the local magistrates, to whom he explained the motive of his journey, and the treatment he had received. The Baron, who possessed both sagacity to appreciate the project and influence to aid its author, volunteered to bring the proposal under official cognisance, with an expressed conviction that it would be favourably entertained. The same evening Austin was attacked by fever, and the order for his immediate expulsion was suspended. In the course of a week, when recovering from illness, he learned that his friend the Baron had interposed successfully with the Governor. It was not in the power of the provincial authorities to grant the petition for permission to establish a colony, but His Excellency and the Ayuntamiento of Bexar promised to forward it, with their recommendation, to Don Joaquim de Arredondo, Commandant-General of the Eastern Internal Provinces at Monterey in New Leon. The memorial for leave to settle three hundred families of Louisiana in Texas was transmitted accordingly; but, before the result of the application could be ascertained, Austin left Bexar in January, 1821, for the United States, De Bastrop having agreed to act as his representative during his absence.

The journey homewards was attended by extreme suffering and hardship. From Bexar to the Sabine, Texas was then a total solitude, the settlements at Nacagdoches and its vicinity having been

destroyed by the Spaniards in 1819. Robbed and deserted by his fellow-travellers, Austin was left alone on the prairies, nearly two hundred miles from any habitation, destitute of provisions and the means of procuring them. In this wretched situation, with nothing to subsist upon but acorns and pecan nuts, he journeyed onwards for eight days, constantly exposed to the weather, at the most inclement season, swimming and rafting rivers and "creeks," until he reached the hospitable roof of an American settler, twenty miles from the Sabine. Worn down with hunger and fatigue, he was unable to proceed further. His constitution had received a shock, from which it never recovered. After recruiting his strength, he resumed his course, and arriving in Missouri in spring, commenced preparations for removal to Texas, but a cold which had settled on his lungs, produced an inflammation that terminated his existence, a few days after the gratifying intelligence was communicated to him of the approval of his petition by the Spanish authorities at Monterey. He died on the 10th of June, 1821, in his fifty-seventh year, leaving as a last injunction to his son Stephen, to prosecute his plan of Texan colonization. During a life of vicissitude and activity, Moses Austin maintained a reputation free from the suspicion of dishonour. His energy disappointment could not damp, nor misfortune subdue.*

The permission prayed for in Austin's memorial was granted by the supreme government of the

* Biographical Notice of Moses Austin, by Mirabeau B. Lamar.

Eastern Internal Provinces of New Spain, on the 17th of January, 1821. The official document of that date sets forth the expediency of permitting three hundred families to settle in Texas, according to their desire, conveyed through Austin, provided that "to the first, or principal, requisite of being Roman Catholics, or agreeing to become so, before entering the Spanish territory," they also added credentials of their good character and habits, and took the necessary oath to obey and defend the government, to maintain fidelity to the king, and observe the political constitution of the Spanish monarchy. These conditions being observed, "the most flattering hopes might be formed that the province would receive an important augmentation in agriculture, arts, and industry, from the introduction of the new settlers." A subsequent communication from the Governor of Texas intimated that, for the better regulation of the Louisianian families who were to emigrate, and during the formation of the new settlement, until the administration of justice had been provided for by the government, the settlers were to consider themselves governed by, and subordinate to, Moses Austin. Don Erasmo Seguin, a respectable citizen of Bexar, was despatched by Don Antonio Martinez, in conformity with the orders of his superior, Don Joaquim de Arredondo, as a special commissioner to the United States, for the purpose of communicating the decision of the government to Austin, and enforcing the conditions of the grant.

Stephen Austin remained in New Orleans until the arrival of the commissioner at Natchitoches,

where he joined him, and, in obedience to his father's last injunction, proceeded with vigour and alacrity to undertake the conduct of the projected settlement. On the 5th of July, 1821, he started with the commissioner from Natchitoches for Bexar —sixteen Americans whom he had employed to accompany him being of the party. He arrived at San Antonio in safety, on the 10th of August, after a protracted journey, not devoid of incident; and the first point to which he directed his attention was the selection of a suitable site for his colony. He was kindly received by Governor Martinez, who acknowledged him as, in all respects, the legal representative of his father, and granted him a general permission to explore the country on the Colorado river, and to fix upon such a situation as he might deem most advantageous for the settlement.

In compliance with the Governor's request, Austin furnished a plan for the distribution of land to the settlers, which he considered sufficiently advantageous for them, besides being adapted to a wilderness country, where compact location was desirable, as a protection from the Indians. It was proposed to give to each head of a family, and each single man above the age of twenty-one years, six hundred and forty acres, three hundred and twenty acres in addition for the wife, should there be one, one hundred and sixty acres for each child, and eighty acres for each slave. The distribution of land according to these proportions received the official sanction of the Governor, communicated in a letter to Stephen Austin, dated the 19th of August.

Leaving San Antonio at the close of August, he proceeded to La Bahia, where, having procured a guide from the Alcalde, he, with the remainder of his company of Americans, now reduced to nine, explored the River Guadalupe down to the bay, and endeavoured to wind round the bay shore to the mouth of the Colorado. Involved in difficulties among the numerous tide inlets, by the ignorance of the guide, he dismissed him, and bore up north until he struck the road at the crossing of the La Baca. Having explored the country between the Brazos and Colorado, he was satisfied of its eligibility as the seat of the future settlement, and time has since established the prudence of his choice. He now directed his course towards the United States, to arrange for the shipment of emigrants.

On his return to New Orleans, he advertised for emigrants in the public prints, giving full explanations of the conditions on which they were to be received. The advertisements promised to settlers the proportions of land authorised by the letter of August 19th from the Governor of Texas. No charge was attached to the grants except the payment to Mr. Austin of twelve and a half cents per acre, to be disbursed in instalments, in produce of the country, after receipt of title—Mr. Austin taking upon himself the cost of surveying, as well as all other fees, stamps, and charges, the expense of translating Spanish documents, with the trouble and labour of attending to the business and procuring the deeds. Out of the fund thus raised, he proposed to aid poor emigrants, and provide for

local administration and defence. It was evident that a fund of some kind was essential to the success of the settlement, and to raise it by voluntary contribution, or by a tax, or otherwise than by preliminary contract, Mr. Austin believed to be impracticable. He had submitted the question in its various bearings to the Governor of Texas, and requested his opinion as to whether the authorities would be likely to interfere with such an arrangement between him and the settlers. It was stated in reply, that the government would expect strict compliance with its own prescribed conditions as to the number and character of the settlers, but there appeared to be no reason why it should interfere with any private arrangement, legally and fairly made, of the kind indicated. The case was supposed, that should nine hundred families apply for admission, no more than three hundred of them could be accommodated, and the contractor would therefore select those only who chose to accede to the proposed terms. The answer was, that, if no fraud, or deceptive allurement, were held out to mislead, even such an arrangement as that, freely and voluntarily made, and understood by all parties, would not be impeded by executive interference. In conclusion, however, the Governor remarked that it was only matter of opinion with him, as he was unable to say what the supreme authority might do under these circumstances. After this explanation, Mr. Austin deemed himself justified in providing means for remunerating himself and promoting objects of general utility in the mode specified.'

The terms announced in the journals of Louisiana and Mississippi for Texan emigrants were attractive, and many persons evinced an inclination to avail themselves of them; but, at the commencement, means of transport were wanting. By the liberality of a friend (Mr. J. H. Hawkins), a schooner called "The Lively" was placed at Mr. Austin's disposal, fitted out with provisions, arms, ammunition, seed corn, and agricultural implements, with directions to sail from New Orleans for Matagorda Bay, and thence up the Colorado to an eligible landing-place. The Lively proceeded on her voyage in November, 1821, with eighteen emigrants on board, whilst Austin, accompanied and followed by others, went by Red River to Natchitoches, and thence travelled by land to the "crossing" of the La Bahia road, on the Brazos river, where he arrived in December, and broke the silence of the wilderness with the stir of industry. Leaving his hardy followers to ply the axe on their lands, he proceeded to the coast, in the hope of meeting the Lively at the entrance of the Colorado. The schooner never arrived, and Mr. Austin, after waiting three months in daily expectation of her appearance, and having sustained the severest privations, aggravated by the sickness of hope deferred, re-ascended the river to the La Bahia road, where he was met by his brother James, with whom, and in company with twenty others, he journeyed to San Antonio, where he arrived on the 15th of March, 1822. On making his report to the Governor, he received an intimation alike unexpected and unwelcome.

In August, 1821, when Stephen Austin first

visited San Antonio, he was apprised of the adoption of the Plan of Iguala, and the establishment of Mexican independence, during the spring of that year. The Spanish Governor of Texas, Martinez, had not been superseded, and his official acts relating to the New Settlement were no longer those of a functionary of old Spain, but of independent Mexico. Under these circumstances, Austin was painfully surprised to learn that it would be necessary for him to proceed immediately to the capital, in order to procure from the Constituent Cortes, then in session, a confirmation of the permission granted to Moses Austin, and receive special instructions as to the distribution of lands, and other details connected with the grant. Although totally unprepared for such a journey, it was idle to complain, and there was no time for hesitation. Consigning the management of the infant colony to a man of judgment and discretion, he quitted San Antonio for the city of Mexico, in company with Dr. Robert Andrews, on the 20th of March, 1822. After a harassing journey of 1200 miles, over roads infested with deserters, robbers, and hostile Indians, he reached his destination on the 29th of April, arriving just in time to witness the rise and fall of Iturbide.

The Constituent Cortes, summoned in accordance with the provisional adoption of the Spanish Constitution, was still in session, and several Americans were in attendance (among them General Wilkinson, whose connexion with Burr's projects has been noticed, and Hayden Edwards, whose name will afterwards arise), all of them petitioning the new

government for concessions similar to that which had been obtained from the Spanish authorities by Moses Austin. The result of these applications was the appointment of a committee to frame a general law of colonization. Austin pleaded the peculiar features of his case, as entitling him to the benefit of a special enactment; but the committee reported in favour of a general bill, which, having been discussed, had approached its final stage, when Iturbide unceremoniously ejected the national representative body, and nominated instead a *Junta Instituyente*, composed of his chosen partisans. This event again threw open the question of a colonization law. Proceedings on the subject were, however, speedily resumed; another committee was appointed, and a new law reported, differing but slightly from its predecessor, which finally passed, was approved by the Emperor, and officially promulgated on the 4th of January, 1823. Don Jose Manuel de Herrera, the Minister of Exterior and Interior relations (formerly agent at New Orleans), and Don Andres Quintana, his deputy, being favourable to foreign settlement, Austin experienced little difficulty in accomplishing the object of his visit. The Council of State reported their opinion of his claim on the 14th of January, and, on the 18th of February, an imperial decree, confirming the grant which had been made in his father's favour by the Spanish authorities, appeared in the public prints.* His

* No defined limits were assigned to the colony, nor any specific time prescribed for completing the conditions of settlement. In these particulars, Austin's first, or the "old" colony, as it is usually called, differs from all subsequent establishments in Texas under the Mexican Colonization Laws.

business being, to all appearance, concluded, he prepared to depart for Texas, and intended to have taken leave of the capital on the 23rd of February, when the gathering of another political storm arrested his movements. Generals Santa Anna and Echavarri had respectively proclaimed insurrectionary "Plans," in opposition to the Emperor, whose days of sovereignty were numbered. Deserted by the army and expelled from the throne, the acts of Iturbide were annulled by the assembly which he had forcibly dissolved. But, whatever may have been the constitutional justice of this step, it operated oppressively upon Austin, who, in consequence of the decree annulling all titles that had emanated from the deposed ruler, was obliged again to memorialise the Cortes to confirm the concession of the 18th February, or otherwise afford relief as that body might deem proper. On the 11th of April a decree was passed, referring the memorial and concession to the Supreme executive power, and suspending the law of colonization passed by the *Junta Instituyente*, on the 4th of January, until the subject should be re-considered by the Cortes. The executive confirmed and sustained the imperial concession in favour of the memorialist, by a decree of the 14th April; and thus Mr. Austin was at last enabled to return to Texas, and the management of his affairs, on the 28th of that month, after a year's vexatious detention in a city where he was a total stranger, foreign to the usages, and imperfectly acquainted with the language of the inhabitants.

On his arrival at Monterey, he applied to the executive head of the Eastern Internal Provinces

for special instructions, and copies of the laws for the administration of the local affairs of the colony, which had been committed to his charge, in general terms, by the decree of the Supreme Government on the 18th of February. The application having been duly considered by the provincial authorities, they resolved, in substance, that Austin's powers under the said decree were full and ample as to the administration of justice and the general municipal affairs of the colony—that he was to command the militia, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel—that he had the right to make war upon aggressive Indian tribes—to introduce needful supplies by the port of Galveston, during the infancy of the settlement—in short, that he was empowered to maintain good order, and govern the colony in all civil, judicial, and military matters, to the best of his ability, and as equity might require, until the government should be otherwise organised, and copies of laws furnished—rendering, in the mean time, to the Governor of Texas an account of his acts, or of any important event within the sphere of his administration, and being himself subject to the Commandant-General of the Eastern Internal Provinces. The local government was thus committed to him without the guidance of written laws, or specific instructions of any kind.

On the 17th of July the Governor of Texas, Don Luciano Garcia, appointed Baron de Bastrop Commissioner to apportion the lands for the colonists, and, in concert with the contractor Austin, to issue titles to each in the name of the government. By an official act, dated the 26th of July, the Governor

gave the name of "San Felipe de Austin" to the town which was to be located as the capital of the colony. The commissioner entered upon his duties in August. In consequence of Mr. Austin's long detention in Mexico, the settlement was nearly broken up, and emigration had altogether ceased. Many of the early immigrants had returned to the United States, and a number of those who, in consequence of Austin's announcements, intended to join the colony, had stopped on the Ayish Bayou, in the vicinity of Nacogdoches, or on the Trinity—commencing, in this desultory manner, the settlement of those districts. In 1824 the colony included the stipulated number of 300 families. The remaining titles and surveys were completed by Gasper Flores, a special commissioner appointed in the room of De Bastrop, who was summoned to attend at Saltillo, as a member of the Legislature of the State of Coahuila and Texas.

Hitherto the duties which devolved upon Stephen Austin, though calculated to exhaust the patience and depress the spirit, were merely preparatory to the great work of colonization which had been grievously interrupted and embarrassed. An unlucky fatality seemed from the beginning to weigh upon the enterprise. The commanders of the first vessels that sailed with stores from the United States, owing probably to the inaccuracy of the charts, were unable to "make" the place of rendezvous at the mouth of the Colorado. One cargo which was safely landed was destroyed by the Caranchahua Indians, in the autumn of 1822, and four men massacred. The settlers were compelled

to bring seed corn from the Sabine, a distance of several hundred miles, or to purchase it at Bexar, where it was scarce and dear. They were destitute of bread; and sugar and coffee were only present to them in hope. Their dependence was on the game of the country — buffalo, bear, deer, wild turkey, and *mustangs.* But buffalo hunting was perilous among unchastised tribes of Indians, a failure in the *mast* of the woods had rendered the bears meagre and scarce, and the venison likewise was in bad condition. Wild horses, however, were fat and very abundant, and it is estimated that 100 of them were eaten during the first two years. In this condition of affairs, the withdrawal of a portion of the colonists will occasion little surprise.

To stimulate despondency and educe order out of chaos became the business of Mr. Austin, who, having complied with all the formalities required of him by the law, may be termed the "Empresario" of the first colony in Texas. While taking the necessary steps for putting the settlers in possession of their lands, he did not neglect the local government of the colony. Sensible of the impossibility of managing in person all the details of civil administration, he continued the division of the settlement into two magisterial districts made by order of Don Jose Felix Trespalacios, Governor of Texas, and likewise formed others—directing that an *Alcalde*, or justice of peace, should be chosen by popular election in each, with jurisdiction in civil cases to the extent of 200 dollars, reserving to suitors the right of appeal to himself, on all sums

exceeding twenty-five dollars. He also formed a code of provisional regulations, in civil and criminal matters, which was approved by the provincial government. In the month of September, 1824, he appointed Samuel M. Williams secretary of the local government, and aided by his most praiseworthy and gratuitous endeavours, formed a book of record, in which the land documents and title deeds were registered with a degree of industry, care, and fidelity that entitled the agents in the work to the lasting gratitude of the inhabitants. The whole of the titles of the 300 families which constituted the settlement, were copied by Mr. Williams from the original, and were signed by the Empresario, the Commissioner, and the Alcalde, so that they might have equal validity in law as the originals deposited in the colonial archives.

Notwithstanding Mr. Austin's indefatigable endeavours for the general good, and his fidelity to his engagements, he was doomed to encounter a full share of the carping opposition which is the usual lot of those who take the lead in undertakings like that in which he was embarked. It has been already stated that, as a compensation for outlay and labour extraneous to the obligations which, as the originator of the settlement, he was officially called upon to discharge, and for certain other objects of common interest, he proposed to create a fund by contracting with the settlers for payment of twelve cents and a half per acre on their grants. The extent of those grants, be it noted, had been greatly increased beyond the quantity promised by

him, through the provisions of the subsequently enacted National Colonization Law.* Still, large as his disbursements and sacrifices of time had been, and ample as were the allotments conceded to the settlers, when the period arrived for paying the amount charged upon the lands by previous and voluntary agreement, complaint and demur arose among so many, that the Empresario, fearful of jeopardising the settlement of the country by an attempt to enforce his claims, declined accepting compliance with their engagements from any, unless it were exacted from all. The result was, the disappearance of the original contracts, and the regulation of payments on the land titles by the political chief or Governor of Texas, by a fee bill published on the 12th of May, 1824. A considerable number of the settlers being too poor to defray the immediate and indispensable charges (which comprised commissioner's, surveyor's, and office fees, cost of stamped paper, &c.), the means were procured for them by Austin, who, to get the settlement under weigh, cheerfully served them in every capacity, even, in some cases, to the selecting and locating of their lands. By exacting payment of all fees and charges in cash, from those who had cash to spare, money was raised to meet the payments to government, exigible before delivery, on

* By the Mexican Colonization Law of 4th January, 1823, the lowest allotment to agricultural settlers was to be a *labor* (about 177 acres English), and for those who raised stock, a *sitio*, or league square, exceeding by a fraction 4,428 acres English. Facilities for irrigation regulated the difference in the valuation of the land. A copious abstract of the Colonization Laws will be found in the Appendix to this work, No. III.

the deeds of those who were destitute of funds. The mass of the settlers who paid any thing, paid in kind—giving cows at from twenty to twenty-five dollars a head, or Indian corn, at two and three dollars a bushel, in lieu of money; and the property received at this valuation was frequently sold for two-thirds less, to raise the means of sustaining the local administration, and preventing confusion and anarchy. By this expedient, rich and poor were provided for, and many persons became proprietors of leagues of land in the "old colony," who, when they reached it, were not worth twenty dollars. Yet an outcry was excited against the Empresario, and, strange as it may seem, some of the poorer class, who were most benefited by the arrangement, joined in the vituperation of its author.

Doubtless a large proportion of the settlers did not thoroughly understand the nature of Mr. Austin's position. The only personal advantage he derived from establishing the colony was from the "premium lands" conceded to him by the government in his capacity of Empresario.* He undertook a particular class of arduous and important duties, from anxiety for the enterprise, which must have failed unless those duties had been discharged

* The premium granted to the Empresario by the Colonization Law of 4th January, 1823, was at the rate of three *haciendas* (fifteen *sitios* or leagues square), and two *labors* for each two hundred families introduced by him. In the absence of available labour, the lands were of little immediate value to the Empresario, who was bound to people and cultivate them in twelve years from the date of the concession, on peril of forfeiture. These regulations were altered by the State Laws of Coahuila and Texas. See Appendix No. III.

by some competent person, and no one would have accepted the trust without pecuniary recompense. His voluntary engagements involved a serious responsibility, in addition to trouble and expense. As Anglo-Americans, the settlers required translations of the laws and orders of the government, and the only persons who had acquired a knowledge of the Spanish language being the Empresario and the Colonial Secretary, they had the task of supplying the settlers with copies in manuscript, then the only available mode of communicating information. Austin, without assistance, civil or military, from the government, had nothing but his own moral influence to sustain his authority. The colony did not contain a single soldier, and, for the first five years, there were not fifty in all Texas, nor was any salary or allowance whatever appropriated to the expenses of local administration. Yet the affairs of the settlement proceeded with regularity, and with less internal dissension than might have been anticipated. To this the dispositions of the colonists themselves were, of course, mainly instrumental. The idea has been industriously circulated in the United States and Europe, that the early colonisers of Texas were chiefly criminal outcasts from the neighbouring territories. No representation could be more unfounded or unfair. Fugitives from justice might indeed cross the frontier, seeking shelter under a foreign jurisdiction, in a locality where escape was comparatively easy; but measures were adopted, both by the government and by Austin, to shield Texas from that evil; and in 1823-4, several foreign delinquents

were expelled from the colony under the severest threats of punishment in the event of their return. This fact proves that the intruders could not have been numerous, as the militia, which was composed of the settlers themselves, was the only power by which their expulsion could have been effected.

"If having escaped many perils," observes Mr. Austin in a statement of authenticated facts, upon which I have drawn for many of these details,* "is to be considered as a presage that Fortune has taken this new settlement under her protection, there is abundant reason for hoping that it will prosper in future. It was undertaken, and has been established by individual enterprise alone, without the aid of strong capitalists, and totally unsupported by troops or succours of any kind from government. In this respect, it presents an anomaly in the history of similar establishments. Independent of perils from hostile Indians, scarcity of provisions, internal dissensions, and many others incidental to an infant settlement in the wilderness, it has seen four great political changes in the government of the nation, and it has worked its way in peace and safety through them all. Those changes were from the despotic government under the Regency in 1821-22; from that to the Republic under the Supreme Executive power in 1823-24, and from that to the Federal System, which now exists."

* "Translation of the Laws, Orders, and Contracts of Colonization, from January, 1821, to 1829, in virtue of which Colonel Stephen F. Austin introduced and settled Foreign Emigrants in Texas, with an Explanatory Introduction."—*Columbia (Texas)*, 1837.

The founder of the first Anglo-American settlement in Texas might well regard his triumph over past difficulties as the pledge of an auspicious future. The heir of his father's enterprise, he dug in the heart of an alien wilderness, with the sturdy hands of a small company of freemen, the foundation of an empire, destined not only to be the centre of a superior civilization, but to reclaim from barbarism, partial or complete, millions whose energies, physical and mental, have long been wasted, or misdirected, under the combined ascendancy of sloth, ignorance, and slavish superstition.

After the confirmation of Austin's grant by the decree of the Supreme Executive of the Mexican nation, on the 14th of April, 1823, the Cortes continued to sit, but transacted little business, waiting for the Provinces to declare themselves free and sovereign States. This declaration having been made, a new convocation was decreed, for the purpose of organising a permanent government. The delegates chosen by the separate States, besides framing the Federal Constitution, enacted a National Colonization law, empowering each State of the confederation to dispose of the public domain within its limits, on any terms that did not conflict with general statute. So soon as the State of Coahuila and Texas had organised its government,* the legislature, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal enactment, proceeded to pass a State Colonization law, and to contract with various individuals for the settlement of the several sections of

* For the Constitution of the State of Coahuila and Texas, see Appendix No. II.

Texas, as they are designated on the smaller map introduced into this work, for the express object of illustrating what has been called the "Empresario System."* Two descriptions of grants, of equal validity, in consequence existed—those whose titles emanated from the old Spanish government, and those obtained from the State of Coahuila and Texas, in conformity with the laws of the Republic.

The nature of "Empresario" grants (or, properly speaking, *contracts*) has been much misunderstood, and the character of the Texan people has unjustly suffered from the frauds that have been perpetrated, by foreign speculators, on persons who have yielded a blind belief to interested misrepresentations. As this system of settlement is closely interwoven with the Anglo-American portion of Texan history, I shall endeavour to explain its true character as concisely as the end in view will allow.

By the law of the State of Coahuila and Texas, of the 24th March, 1825, the Governor was authorised to accept proposals from Empresarios (contractors) to settle a certain number of families within stipulated limits, in the term of six years. The first step towards a settlement was the presentation of a memorial from the contractor, or contractors, praying for permission to colonise under the conditions of the law, stating the number of families proposed to be introduced, and defining the limits of the lands on which they desired to locate them. Usually, to afford ample choice to

* This map, published originally by Mitchell, of Philadelphia, is very inaccurate and imperfect.

settlers, a tract, greatly exceeding the appropriations to be made, (containing often millions of acres,) was indicated in the memorial, and temporarily conceded by the government. The articles of the contract provided for obedience to the Federal and State laws, and the legal conditions of colonization—respect for all legal titles to land that might have been previously held within the limits of the grant—retention by the State of the right of property over all the lands which should remain, after laying off those belonging to the settlers, and the "premium lands" of the Empresarios—abstinence from the sale of arms and ammunition to the barbarous Indians, and the purchase from them of mules and horses, without assurance of the same having been properly acquired—the organization of a militia whenever there was an adequate male population—the use of the Spanish language in all official communications, instruments, deeds, and other public documents; in every other matter not provided for or expressed, the Empresarios, or the new settlers holding under them, were to abide and be governed by the Federal Constitution, and the particular laws of the State. It was likewise stipulated that the Empresarios should be at liberty to enter into a new contract with the government, for the settlement of the surplus lands within the grant, after locating the specified number of settlers, and laying off their own proportion of premium lands.*

* Some of the grants stipulated for the introduction of settlers of particular nations. By Article 2 of the grant to Lorenzo de Zavala, 12th March, 1829, he was bound to introduce and establish, on his own account, within six years, five hundred families,

The colony was to be regulated, and the lands thereof distributed, by a commissioner from the government, acting according to legal instructions, which withheld from him the power of giving or allotting lands within the limits of the grant to any one whatsoever, without the knowledge and approbation of the Empresarios.*

The government designated the term of six years, within which they were bound to present the number of families they contracted for, under the penalty of losing the rights and privileges offered in their favour, in proportion to the number of families which they failed to introduce, and the contract was totally annulled if they did not bring, at least, one hundred families.

of which one part should be of Mexican, and the remainder of foreign origin, excluding *Spaniards*. By Article 7 of the first grant to Joseph Vehlein, on the 21st December, 1826, he was to establish three hundred families, Swiss, German, and North American; and by Article 3 of Vehlein's second grant, of 11th October, 1828, the one hundred families he was allowed to introduce were to be of German, Swiss, and English origin.

* "The Empresarios *have control* over the tracts of land assigned, during the period aforesaid (six years), by virtue of the powers contained in the grant, and the possession under it, so far as concerns the introduction and settlement of families so introduced and established, with the assent and under the agreement of the Empresarios, and which families cannot be introduced and settled without this assent and agreement. The Empresarios are required to judege and determine on the requisite legal qualifications of the settlers, and to regulate their traffic with the Indian tribes. All this is control and jurisdiction."—*Opinion of Chancellor Kent (U. S.) on the Empresario claims of the government of Coahuila and Texas, under the authority of Mexico; given in reference to the contracts of Dr. J. C. Beales and Jose Manuel Royuela.*

In strict conformity to law, an applicant for settlement was required to present a certificate from the authorities of the place whence he came, accrediting his "Christianity," that is, his profession of the "Catholic Apostolic Roman" religion, and his morality and steady habits; without the production of such certificate, as also that of the Empresarios, testifying its genuineness, the commissioner was bound to withhold title. In practice, a law so narrow in itself, and generally at variance with the interests of the Empresarios, was unscrupulously evaded. To procure an order of survey, it was sufficient for an applicant to go to a neighbouring Alcalde, and obtain, on the testimony of two by-standers, and payment of a dollar and a half, the certificate required. Upon presentation of the paper to the Commissioner, an order of survey was granted, and the title issued to the land surveyed, The deed was upon stamped paper, and contained—first, the petition of the applicant—second, the order of the Commissioner passing him to the Empresario, to ascertain if his consent were granted —third, the declaration of the Empresario, expressing that consent—fourth, the decree ordering a survey —fifth, the surveyor's return, or the description of the land—sixth, the decree ordering the title to be extended—and seventh, the extension of title. The stamped paper, on which the title was issued, cost from two to three dollars, and the whole cost of a league of land (4,428 acres English) amounted to about 180 dollars.

The Governor, or the State Legislature, alone had the power to augment the quantity of land

granted to an individual. By either of these authorities, grants, *not exceeding eleven leagues*, might be conceded to one person, he being a Mexican. Government concessions have been made to Empresarios, entitling them to transfer to purchasers to the limited amount of eleven leagues. Under these concessions, government appointed a commissioner to extend the title of possession. In default of such appointment, it was usual to petition the nearest Alcalde for an order of survey, and he, upon the return of the "field notes," decreed that the title should be extended, and proceeded to put the party in possession. The act was recorded in the Alcalde's office, the copy issued to the party being signed by the clerk of the Ayuntamiento. The titles thus bestowed, though unusual, were valid. The total cost per league of land thus obtained would amount to an average sum of 125 dollars, payable in cash on receipt of title.

It will be evident, from the preceding outline, that the impression which prevailed and afforded a cover for nefarious jobbing in land "scrip"—to the effect that the lands included within the limits of the "grants," which overspread the early maps of Texas, were the property of the respective Empresarios—was utterly and extravagantly erroneous. The Empresario, as the Spanish term implies, was a "contractor," and nothing more. He was the individual who, taking advantage of the facilities offered by the Colonization Laws, agreed with the government to settle a certain number of families within the bounds of a prescribed district, receiving a regulated proportion of "premium land" in return

for his expense and trouble. When the immigrants had obtained their several "head-rights," and the Empresario his premium, the residue included within the bounds of the grant remained a portion of the public domain, and he who disposed of any part of it by direct contract, or by the sale of "scrip," was guilty of fraud.*

* Land Companies were formed in New York, who, deriving their titles by purchase from Empresarios, issued great quantities of worthless scrip. In the case of Carter *v.* Dey and Curtis, tried in New York in 1832-33, it was proved that scrip of the Galveston Bay and Texan Land Company had been sold to the amount of 6,210,390 acres. According to the testimony of the Clerk of the Company, the price of scrip in New York ranged from one to two cents an acre; another witness testified that he had sold it at five and ten cents an acre. The Company had expended about 50,000 dollars on the enterprise. It was proved that scrip had never been sold nor had any market in Texas. The families sent out by the Company were chiefly Europeans; their number was limited to 1,200 by the terms of the original contracts.

CHAPTER V.

Motives of the Mexican Government in granting lands to foreign settlers—Frontier Indians—Comanches—Intrusive Tribes in Texas—Aboriginals and Frontier Settlers—Fredonian outbreak—Civil Commotions in Mexico—Spanish Expedition against Mexico—Decree of 1829 abolishing Slavery—Its intention—Negotiations of the United States for the purchase of Texas—Expulsion of the Mexican President Guerrero.—Bustamente's Anti-American Law—Progress of Empresario Settlements—Increase of Military in Texas.

THE leading motives which influenced the various authorities that presided over independent Mexico, in affording facilities to foreign settlers, were avowed in the Sovereign Constituent Cortes, during the session of 1823. It was stated, in the official report of the Minister of Exterior and Interior relations, that, in consequence of Indian irruptions, the Missions of Texas had been ruined and abandoned. To secure the frontier against savage inroads, and at the same time increase the public prosperity, the Minister recommended that waste lands should be opened to colonization, on a system similar to the national land sales of the United States.* Shortly after the presentation of this report, news arrived of fresh incursions of wild Indian tribes into the provinces of New Mexico and Chihuahua, which had the effect of still farther inclining the legislative body in favour of border settlements.

On the North-eastern frontier of Mexico, there

* Poinsett's Notes on Mexico.

are hardly any Indian peasantry of the Aztec race—the peaceful cultivators, whose ancestors were dwellers in cities, in the days of Montezuma. The tribes in that region are of nomadic habits, uniting the traits which distinguish the mountaineer and hunter, with the marauding independence of the Bedouin Arab. For centuries, a war of extermination, originating in a barbarous policy, had been waged between these restless hordes and the Spanish colonists of the Eastern Internal Provinces. This deadly and hereditary feud removed all hope of bringing round the North-eastern Indians to social life by gentle means. The spirit of vengeance, and an inveterate hatred, had raised an almost insurmountable barrier between them and the whites.* The Apaches Mescaleros and Farones occupy the Bolson de Mapimi, with the mountains of Chanate and the Organos, whence they issued forth to spoil and harass the inhabitants of Durango (New Biscay) and Coahuila. Mortal enemies of the Apaches, several tribes of whom have lived at peace with the colonists, the Comanches and their wild brethren, whom the Spaniards comprehended under the vague and indiscriminate name of Mecos, frequently penetrated into the interior of Durango, Chihuahua and New Mexico plundering and destroying the villages, and driving off horses and cattle. Humboldt notices the singularity of the fact that, after two centuries of colonization, the province of New Mexico did not join the Intendency of New Biscay. The town of Du-

* Humboldt.

rango was founded under the administration of the second viceroy of New Spain—Velasco el Primero —in 1559; and towards the end of the sixteenth century, the ruling viceroy, Count de Monterey, despatched Juan de Onate to New Mexico, who repelled the roving Indians, and colonised the banks of the Rio Grande. But the two provinces are still separated by a desert, extending between the Paso del Norte and Albuquerque, where travellers are obliged to move in armed companies, to secure themselves from the attacks of the Comanches, who, like the Patagonians, have learned to tame the wild horses, and to ride them with the ease and dexterity of Tartars. The military posts of the Eastern Internal Provinces being too far apart to prevent the inroads of the savages, the necessity of defending their homes, their wives, their children and their flocks, was imposed upon the scattered colonists, who, though of European blood—(the inhabitants of New Biscay and New Mexico, are either white, or *consider* themselves so),—and sustained by a temperate climate and a life of singular activity, were frequently surprised, plundered, and slaughtered, by their ever-wakeful adversaries.

Five-sixths of the wild Indians that roamed over the territory now designated as the Republic of Texas, had their haunts north and west of San Antonio de Bexar. The region intervening between the upper waters of the Colorado and the river Puerco, was exclusively claimed by the Comanches, more especially the tract lying north of the Guadalupe mountains, and extending to the latitude of Santa Fé. Their superiority of numbers

had given an importance to the Comanches, to which their prowess did not entitle them, and even their numerical strength has been considerably overrated by the terror-stricken Mexicans. The Apaches, estimated at about four thousand souls, occupied the mountainous district between the Puerco and the Rio Grande—far removed from the settlements of Texas, on which they have never intruded.

The country frequented by the Comanches is of extraordinary beauty and fertility. The mountains are not high nor continued chains, but are composed of insulated peaks, which shoot suddenly up out of the plains. These peaks are surrounded on every side by the richest kind of land, which affords pasturage for innumerable herds of wild cattle. From this source, roots and wild fruit, they draw their subsistence. They are a nation of robbers, and will pillage Mexicans, Texans, Americans, or any other people who may come within their reach, and lack ability and spirit to resist.

They seldom appear in bands of more than three or four hundred, as by their precarious mode of living, it would be difficult for a greater number to obtain subsistence. Each party or tribe is under the command of one or more chiefs, who are in turn subject to the control of a principal chief, elected by the suffrage of the whole "nation."

They have no idea of making any preparation for the support of an expedition, but depend on the contingencies of every day to supply them with food; and a body of five hundred could not be kept together for a single month without starvation. This would prevent anything like united action on

their part, against an enemy. Nor are they a people enamoured of war, when there is any prospect of opposition; their depredations are always committed upon the defenceless. Even a single American armed with the rifle has been known to keep large parties of them at bay; their principle being, that it is better to suffer a dozen enemies to escape, than to run the risk of losing a single Comanche. They hold it to be much more honourable to murder a man in his sleep, than to take him in open combat; and bravery they regard as an inferior quality to deceptive cunning. They will, therefore, use every wile to throw the unwary traveller off his guard, by declarations of friendship, that he may be butchered without endangering the lives of any of their tribe.

They seldom destroy the lives of women or children, whom the Indians of the United States are hardly ever known to spare; but they capture and enslave them, incorporating them with the nation, and guarding them so closely that they rarely have an opportunity of escape. They have made many treaties with the Mexicans, all of which have been violated, and not unfrequently within twenty-four hours after signature; so that the remark—"As faithless as a Comanche treaty," has become a Mexican adage.

The Comanche "nation" is perhaps the most perfect democracy on the face of the globe; all public affairs are managed by primary assemblies, and the people have a right to displace a chief, and elect his successor, at pleasure. Male children are even privileged to rebel against their parents, who

are not entitled to chastise them but by consent of the tribe. Any warrior claims and exercises the right of punishing a woman with the utmost rigour, for the most trifling offences. With such a system of social polity, it would be idle to anticipate much harmony in their deliberations. Their war councils not unfrequently terminate in a battle between the different tribes.

They live in tents made of buffalo skins, locating their "villages" in places admitting of easy defence. Their wealth consists of horses and mules, of which they rear some valuable specimens. A horse of superior speed is highly appreciated. Racing is a favourite pastime, and bets are laid by the uncouth sportsmen of the prairies, with as much excitement regarding the result as is shown by those who stake their thousands at Doncaster or Newmarket.

The religious conceptions of the Comanches are very confused; they call God the Great Captain who is in the sky, and they entertain the notion of an evil genius under the earth. Of future rewards and punishments they have no idea, yet they bury their warriors with their horses and arms. Polygamy is tolerated to the extent of the individual's means. Adultery, theft, murder, and other crimes (among themselves), are punished by established usage. All the drudgery is performed by the women, labour being considered degrading by the warriors. Unlike the Red Men of the United States, they avoid the use of ardent spirits, which they call "fool's water." Temperance in this respect, with constant activity, pure streams, and a healthy climate, will account for the unusual pro-

portion of aged persons that are found in the nation.

Their language consists of about 400 words, many of which have been borrowed from the Spanish, and some from the English. In introducing a foreign word, they pay but little attention to the correct pronunciation, and the vocable undergoes a change calculated to render it alien to the ears of its original parents. The primitive terms of the Comanches are short, and several are combined for the expression of complex ideas. The language is very barren of verbs, the functions of which are frequently performed by the aid of gestures and grimaces.*

The Towacanies, or Tahuacanos, an off-shoot from the Comanche nation, maintained themselves above the falls of the Colorado. Horse-stealing formed the principal occupation or pastime of the Towacanies, who, in their thieving and other Indian propensities, have in no degree degenerated from the ancestral stock. The Wacoes, another branch of the Comanches, inhabited the country bordering on the Upper Brazos, ranging as far west as the

* The following are their numerals to 20—they will convey some idea of the language:

1	Simmutsum.	11	Simmemmatouch.
2	Guah.	12	Guahatimmatouch.
3	Pah.	13	Pahatimatouch.
4	Wotchouc.	14	Watchouchtimmstouch.
5	Mannuke.	15	Mannuketimmatouch.
6	Navi.	16	Navitechouchtimmatouch.
7	Tatschouch.	17	Tatschouchtimmatouch.
8	Nannaguatschouch.	18	Nanaguatschouchtimmatouch.
9	Sammannagum.	19	Guahamannaguam.
10	Soaman.	20	Wahaman.

Colorado, and sometimes as far east as the Trinity River. In alliance with the Wacoes were the Pawnee Picts, or Toweashes, residing on the Red River, sometimes on the side of the United States, and sometimes in Texas. The Caranchuhuas inhabited the western sea coast, chiefly around La Baca and Matagorda bays. The Lipans, a small tribe, had no defined limits. They frequented the bays of Aransas and Corpus Christi, and the country lying between them and the Rio Grande. Being the hereditary enemies of the Comanches, they were obliged to avoid their hunting range in the upper country. The small wandering tribe of Toncahuas were in the same predicament with respect to the Comanches. A scanty and harmless tribe called Bidias, roamed, like gipsies, on the waters of the San Jacinto, and supported themselves by hunting and fishing.

These tribes composed the whole strength of the native Indians of Texas within the present geographical limits of the Republic. Besides these, who may be termed indigenous, there were a number of Indians that had emigrated from the United States to the country bordering the Trinity, and between that stream and Red River. These fugitive bands contained portions of the following tribes: Kickapoos, Cushattas, Delawares, Shawnees, Beluxis, Cherokees, Iawanies, Alabamas, Choctaws, Unataquas, Quapaws, Tohooktookies, Caddoes,—in all about 4,000. Most of these Indians (who in Texas are denominated, in the aggregate, "the Cherokees and their Twelve Associate Bands,") entered the country in 1822 and 1824. The Cushattas and

Alabamas, the most orderly of the whole, arrived at a considerably earlier period. All were intruders, who took advantage of the weakness of the authorities, and the confusion which reigned in Mexico, to "squat" upon a fertile soil.

These intrusive Indians were generally more dangerous neighbours to white settlers than the native tribes of Texas. To the obstinate courage and profound dissimulation of their race, they united a spurious civilization, limited chiefly to the vices and mischievous arts of social life. They were expert in the use of the rifle, and not insensible to the advantages of co-operation in warfare. From a long residence in the settled districts of the United States, many of them had acquired a knowledge of the advantages of agriculture. These had fixed habitations, rudely cultivated lands, and stock. Some were possessed of money, received from the government of the United States in compensation for their lands, and had purchased Negro slaves for working their farms, for even the half-civilised Indians have a rooted aversion from manual labour.*

* The possession of Negroes, by rendering the Indians idle and dependent on slave-labour, has confirmed the defects of their character. The Seminole Negroes mostly live separate from their masters, and manage their cattle and crops as they please, giving them a share of the produce. Williams, in his account of Florida, mentions the existence of a law among the Seminoles, prohibiting individuals from selling their Negroes to white people, any attempt to evade which has always raised great commotions among them. The State of Georgia claimed 250,000 dollars of the Creek Indians, for stolen and runaway slaves. Under cover of these claims, says Williams, many Negroes have been removed from their Indian owners, by force or fraud. The slaves prefer the comparatively indolent life of the Indian settlements to the

The tendency of all, when removed from white settlements, was gradually to relinquish habits of wholesome restraint and to relapse into barbarism.*

The whole Indian population of Texas, when Austin's colony was planted, may be estimated at 30,000 souls, of which, however, but a small proportion ranged in the immediate neighbourhood of the settlement, or *resided* within the bounds of Texas Proper. In the destruction of the Missions, the Comanches were the principal agents. Encouraged by the passive submission of the Mexicans of mixed blood, they carried their insolence so far as to ride into Bexar, and alight in the public square, leaving their horses to be caught and pastured by the obsequious soldiers of the garrison, on pain of chastisement. To raise a contribution, they would enter the town with a drove of Mexican horses, stolen by themselves, and, under pretence of having rescued the *Caballada* from hostile Indians, would exact a reward for their honesty. They openly carried off herds of cattle and horses from the set-

sugar and cotton fields of the planter; and the Indian slaveholders are quite satisfied if they are enabled to live without personal toil.

* "The North American Indian is a warrior, and wild to the last degree. You may kill him, or put him to the torture, but make him work, or draw a cry from him—never. Those even among them who are half-civilised, and cultivate the ground, do it, not by their own hands, but by those of their Negroes. This hatred of labour is observable even in the mongrel issue of the Indian and the white."—*Sketches of the United States, by Achille Murat, ci-devant Prince Royal of the Two Sicilies, and American citizen.*

tlements east of the Rio Grande, sparing the lives of the herdsmen, not from motives of humanity, but because they deemed it impolitic to kill those who were so useful in raising horses and mules for the benefit of the Comanches.* The untaught economists of the prairies, while they secured the golden eggs, perceived the wisdom of sparing the prolific goose.

It has been stated that the Imperial Concession of 18th February, 1823, assigned no specific limits to Austin's first colony of three hundred families. It might, however, have been assumed that the settlers would have voluntarily chosen to locate their grants within a narrow compass, for the purpose of neighbourly intercourse, as well as mutual security against the Indians. But the rambling dispositions of the colonists, unrestrained by these considerations, led them to disperse from the east bank of the La Baca river to the San Jacinto, and from the gulf shore to the upper, or San Antonio, road. The perils and privations inseparable from this mode of settlement would have been intolerable to any save North Americans. To Mr. Austin, it could not have been satisfactory, rendering, as it did, the task of government and protection much more difficult and expensive. It was only permitted on the ground that a scattered settlement, within reasonable bounds, would be ultimately of greater general advantage than one within contracted limits, provided the colonists could defend themselves against Indian aggression. As they entertained no apprehensions

* Edwards' Texas.

on that score, they were permitted to follow their inclinations in the choice of their farms. Eventually, the arrangement proved to be beneficial, as, in consequence of the dispersion of the husbandmen, accommodation for strangers and supplies of agricultural produce could be obtained in every direction, without the cost and trouble of distant transport.*

Although the colonists, with good rifles and store of ammunition, did not fear the attacks of the savage tribes, yet, for the first two years, their numbers were so small, as to demand the constant exercise of fortitude and forbearance, in their dealings with the natives. On the coast, the Caranchahuas were very hostile, as were the Wacoes and Towacanies in the interior, whilst the beggarly and insolent Toncahuas, Lipans and Bidias, intermingled with

* It is not among rude back-woodsmen only that the love of a wilderness settlement amounts almost to a passion in the frontier States. It is shared by planters of average means and education. An anecdote was mentioned to me in Texas, of a Tennessee planter, which is worthy of being recorded. Mr. C—, the gentleman in question, had removed from his own State to Red River, and after a few years absence, a friend left Tennessee for the purpose of paying him a visit. Arrived at Red River, he found that Mr. C— had relinquished his abode there for a settlement at Nacogdoches. Proceeding to Nacogdoches, he was shown his vacant location, and was instructed to seek him at a plantation on the Brazos. Having travelled to the Brazos, he was told that the Squire was no longer there, but located at C—'s Creek on the Colorado. Here at last he met the object of his search, to all appearance very snugly settled. The visitor having expressed his gratification at finding his old friend after a long search, so pleasantly *fixed*,—" Ah," said Mr. C—, " I must move again, they begin to crowd me, I can't go out with the rifle !"—The settlements on the Colorado were then few and far between, and Mr. C— was in his 85th year.

the settlers, were only restrained from mischief by prudent management and seasonable presents. In 1824, when the colony had grown somewhat more robust, a party of Caranchahuas were tied and whipped, in presence of their chiefs, for horse-stealing. Several murders having increased the exasperation of the colonists, previously awakened by systematic depredations, they mustered a party of sixty riflemen to inflict a signal punishment on the delinquents. The expedition, which was commanded by Mr. Austin in person, was successful. Half of the Caranchahua tribe was cut off, and the remainder taking refuge in the church of the Mexican Mission of La Bahia, obtained a truce, on condition that they should never again cross the La Baca river, the western boundary of the colony, —an engagement which, in spirit, they faithfully performed.*

It is not in populous cities, surrounded by the comforts and embellishments of modern society, nor in the rural retreats of old and wealthy countries, that men can form a dispassionate estimate of his position who cleaves the furrow in the wilderness, exposed to the weapon of the lurking savage. Until the labours of a practical philanthropy shall have trained the latter to abandon the chace, and till the ground for subsistence, he must stand in the

* In subsequent years, the Mexicans, provoked by their robberies, commenced the extermination of the remnant of this tribe. The survivors, to the number of forty or fifty, crossed the La Baca, and threw themselves on the protection of the Anglo-Americans of the frontier; who distributed them as servants among their families.

path of civilization as a beast of prey, resisting its progress, and committing havoc for a season, but ultimately and inevitably to be destroyed in turn. The right of wandering aboriginals to the soil is a sentimental abstraction, which has never yet been respected in the practice of what are called civilised states. It is chiefly of value to those on whose behalf it has been pleaded, as the ground of a claim to the humane consideration of the nations by whom they are supplanted. There is one mode, indeed, in which the aboriginal may acquire an indefeasible title to the land he occupies—by cultivation. Of the right which he has to the ground which his labour has first rendered productive, he cannot be deprived, save by an act of iniquitous spoliation, such as the Spaniards perpetrated towards the native Mexicans. But it is otherwise with barbarian hunters, and even with erratic pastoral tribes. The Divine command to "multiply and replenish the earth"—the necessities of over-populated countries—the law of social progress, which decrees the absorption or extermination of all stationary or retrogressive races—alike forbid their unsettled habitation in immense regions to be accounted a true and legal possession. A claim which, if held good, might give exclusive occupancy of a vast continent to a few thousand self-secluding savages, while European multitudes were suffering from the pressure of population on subsistence, is manifestly inconsistent with reason and justice. "Those nations," says Vattel, "(such as the ancient Germans and some modern Tartars) who inhabit fertile countries, but disdain to cultivate their lands, and choose rather to

live by plunder, are wanting to themselves, are injurious to all their neighbours, and deserve to be extirpated like wild beasts. There are others who, to avoid labour, choose to live by hunting, and their flocks. This might doubtless be allowed in the first ages of the world, when the earth, without cultivation, produced more than was sufficient to feed its small number of inhabitants. But, at present, when the human race is so greatly multiplied, it could not subsist if all nations were disposed to live in that manner."

That portion of the monied aristocracy of Europe, who in sumptuous drawing-rooms and spacious halls indulge in the luxury of ostentatious sympathy for all races but their own, do not appreciate the character and situation of the Anglo-American, who has made his home in solitudes unbroken by any human sound, save the whoop of an invisible foe. Accustomed to hear him denounced as a man-slayer, and a land-robber, they take no thought of the spirit which has impelled him onward, the qualities he is constrained to display, and the social ameliorations of which he is the pioneer. He loves the wilderness for the independence it confers—for the sovereignty which it enables him to wield by dint of his personal energies. The forest is subject to his axe—its inhabitants to his rifle. Had the same man drawn his first breath in the land of his forefathers, he might have been a stunted and starving hand-loom weaver, or, at the best, a labourer, faring sumptuously, with a wife and six children, on an uncertain weekly stipend of eight British shillings. In the grand old woods where rises the

smoke of his log-house, he is lord of an untrammelled mind and iron frame. The roof that shelters his little ones is the work of his own hands; the venison that smokes upon the board, and the deerskin that furnishes his hunting-gear, are the spoil of his practised eye and untiring step. Alone he ventures on the Indian's hunting-ground, and, in defiance of the law of the Red Man, bears away a share of the prey. Perhaps the chace absorbs too much of his time—perhaps he falls a victim to the jealousy of the savage—still his career has not been in vain;—he has made a lodgment in the waste, he has opened a track for the van-guard of civilization, the ranks of which will expand for the reception of his posterity. In a few years, where the short, sharp crack of the out-settler's rifle startled the silence of the pine-forest, the voice of Christian worship is heard in the language of Old England; institutions kindred to our own predominate; industry, in its varied branches, prospers; and a fresh accession is made to the extending empire of morality and knowledge.

The American frontier-man may be said to exist in a state of continual warfare;—he experiences, the toils of active service in clearing and cultivating his ground, its anxieties in guarding against a treacherous enemy, and its perils in encountering that enemy, and the beast of prey. Confident in what he dare do and can endure, with all the feelings of his nature roused to vengeance by some sanguinary Indian outrage, he sallies forth in pursuit of the exulting savage. Following unweariedly on his trail, he traverses the prairies, swimming the

streams, noting every impression on grass, sand, twig and tuft, reckless of fatigue, hunger and cold, until he overtakes the remorseless foe, whom, at great numerical disadvantage, he is almost certain to defeat. To men of this class, a campaign is a party of pleasure, and they require only the exercise and discipline of the regular soldier, to make the best troops in the world. Mounted on a favourite horse, armed with the trusty rifle, and accompanied by their dogs, they can explore their way through the woods by the sun and the bark of the trees. Clad in their usual homely dress, an otter skin cunningly folded and sewed, is the depository of tobacco, ammunition, and means for kindling a fire; a wallet slung behind the saddle contains sustenance for man and horse. On the march, a small daily allowance of maize suffices the latter, which, at the evening encampment, is stripped of his furniture and "hobbled" (two of his legs fastened together), and thus left to indulge his appetite on the abundant herbage.—It is of such materials that the active militia of Texas and the South-Western states of the Union is composed.

The Constituent Congress of Coahuila and Texas decreed its installation, agreeably to the Constitutive Act of the Mexican Confederation, on the 15th of August, 1824, but the State Constitution was not framed and sanctioned until the 11th of March, 1827. Public officers were appointed provisionally by the Constituent Congress; and by the fourth article of the organic decree, the state of Coahuila and Texas solemnly pledged itself "to obey, and to sustain, at all hazards, the Supreme Federal powers, and its own union with the rest of the

States, and the constitutional independence of all and each one of them."* On the 24th of March, 1825, a State colonization law was passed, under which grants in Texas were made to many Empresarios. On the 4th of June Mr. Austin contracted for the settlement of 500 foreign families within the following boundaries; commencing on the west bank of the river San Jacinto, at the termination of the ten league reserve from the Gulf of Mexico, thence following up the right bank of said river to its head; thence due north to the road leading to Nacogdoches from Bexar; thence following said road westwardly to a point whence a line due south will strike the Labaca; thence following down the east of the Gulf of Mexico; thence eastwardly along the said ten league line parallel with the coast, to the place of beginning. In the same year Robert Leftwich (an American) contracted for the introduction of 200 families. This contract, after much controversy, at length fell to the Nashville Company of Tennessee, by their agent, the Empresario Sterling C. Robertson, of which company Leftwich was the original agent. Green Dewitt (an American) likewise contracted, in 1825, for settling 300 families in the district lying south-west of Austin's Colony.

In 1826 Benjamin R. Milam (an American) contracted for the introduction of 300 families in the district lying between the Red River and Nacogdo-

* "*El Estado de Coahuila y Tejas se compromete solemnemente á obedecer y sostener, á toda costa, los Supremos Poderos de la Federacion, su Union Federal con los demos Estados, y la Independencia Constitutional de todos y cada uno de elles.*"

ches. Joseph Vehlein (a German) obtained a contract for settling 300 families within the district lying south of the San Antonio road, east of the twenty border leagues reserved by the government, parallel to the course of the Sabine, north of the reserved border of ten leagues, parallel to the course of the coast, and east of Austin's Colony. David G. Burnet (an American) contracted for the settlement of 300 families in a district beginning at the town of Nacogdoches; running thence northwardly and parallel to the west line of the twenty leagues border reserve, parallel to the Sabine fifteen leagues; thence west to the Navosota; thence down that river to the San Antonio road; thence along that road to Nacogdoches, the place of beginning. This contract was extended by the government two years beyond the six to which its duration was limited under the Colonization Law. In the lands allotted for settlement to Vehlein and Burnet a district around Nacogdoches was included, which had been left vacant by the annulment of a contract made with the Empresario Hayden Edwards. The cause assigned for the forfeiture of Edward's contract was his having, either through ignorance or wilful perversion of the law, represented to the colonists that he held the lands within the limits of his grant in fee simple, and had a right to di[illegible] of them for his own benefit. He, it was said, [illegible] payment, until the settlers, informe[illegible] of the tr[illegible]ature of his powers, complained to the government, who revoked the contract, permitting all those that had been located under it, and were "duly qualified accord-

ing to law," to remain upon their lands.* Articles were included in all these contracts, expressly stipulating that the settlers should be certified Roman Catholics, of good moral habits; that the contracting party was neither to introduce nor suffer to remain in the colony, criminals, vagrants, or men of bad conduct or repute; that it should be his duty to establish schools for the Spanish language, to promote the erection of places of worship, providing the same with "ornaments, sacred vessels and other requisites for divine worship, and at the proper time, to apply for such priests as may be required for administering the sacraments and other religious rites."

With the exception of Indian troubles, no interruption arose to the quiet of the settlements until 1826, when an attempt was made, in the department of Nacogdoches, to establish a Texan Republic under the name of Fredonia. This outbreak claims to be noticed, as although it had no directly apparent effect on the measures of the Mexican authorities towards the Anglo-Americans, it may be presumed to have secretly influenced their subsequent policy.

Without entering into details of local or personal interest merely, I may state that Hayden Edwards, whose Empresario contract had been annulled by the government, who ordered him and his brother to withdraw from Texas, conceiving himself injuriously treated, listened to the proposals of certain malcontents, Indian and American, who had concocted a plan of revolt. The person who commu-

* Newell's Texas.

nicated the project to Edwards and solicited his assistance, was John Dunn Hunter, whose "Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America" was published in this country, and excited attention some years ago.* Hunter had visited Mexico, for the purpose of obtaining what had previously been denied to Field and Bowles (two half-breed Cherokee agents); namely, a tract of land for Indian settlement; and failing, like his predecessors, to effect his object, returned home exasperated against the government, and eager for an opportunity to assail it. Finding Edwards, whom he had previously sounded in vain, in a similar mood, after the withdrawal of his grant, and the order of expulsion, he gained his consent to raise the banner of resistance, in conjunction with Bowles and Field, and proclaim the independence of the country, under the name of Fredonia. During Mr. Munroe's Presidency, a system was proposed, on which the United States have since acted, for removing the Indian tribes within their territories to a "reserve" in perpetuity, on the plains of the Missouri, west of the Mississippi. All the Indians with whom treaties had been signed were directed to emigrate to those vast plains; but many diverged from the prescribed course, and sought for settlements in the more genial region of the Red River. On these and others more remote it was arranged that Hunter, Field, and Bowles, should operate, while Edwards tried to rally the Anglo-Texans to his side, and procured auxiliaries from the United States. With a fair

* Longman and Co. London, 1823.

prospect of uniting the Indians in support of the scheme, proclamations were despatched to the Red River and the Brazos, soliciting the co-operation of the colonists, and a small force under Parmer took the field, and obtained the advantage in the first skirmish. At this stage terminated the success of the Fredonians. The bearer of the proclamation to Red River betrayed the secret of his mission, and denounced his employers in a Natchitoches paper, whilst Colonel Stephen Austin arrested the emissary to the Brazos. The government despatched a Mexican officer with 300 men to Nacogdoches, who was joined at San Felipe by Austin and a considerable body of his colonists. The united forces proceeded towards the scene of insurrection, but, before they reached it, the necessity for their intervention had ceased. A man named Bean (the same who had survived the wreck of Philip Nolan's expedition), arrived in Nacogdoches about this period. At first a partisan of the Fredonian cause, he speedily altered his views, and seeking Bowles, urged the Cherokee chief to abandon the insurgents, saying that if his tribe wanted land, the way to get it would be to propitiate the government by sacrificing Hunter and Field. His arguments were effectual; Bowles deserted his party, and caused Hunter to be murdered within tweny-five miles of Nacogdoches. On receiving intelligence of this event, Field fled, was pursued across the Sabine, captured and similarly dealt with. Parmer and his men were pardoned, and thus ended the "Fredonian war." Hayden Edwards was, up to a late date, a resident at Nacogdoches, in a green old age; having

lived to witness extraordinary changes in the land he failed to revolutionise.

After this abortive attempt, a decided, though gradual alteration was manifested in the policy of the Supreme Government towards Texas. Troops began to be introduced, at first in small numbers, at considerable intervals, and under various pretences; these men, however, were not recalled, but were stationed at Nacogdoches until the garrison there amounted to two hundred and fifty. Other garrisoned posts were in like manner established, ostensibly to secure the revenue, but in reality, to overawe and control the Anglo-American colonists, whose rapid increase and prosperity inspired the Mexicans with envy and alarm.

In the habits, sentiments, and training of the Northern settlers and the ruling race, there were too many points of dissimilarity for the long continuance of amicable relations. The Americans, although they did not oppose the Catholic religion, despised the superstitious observances and detested the intolerant bigotry of its Mexican professors. Persons who had been long married in the United States were obliged to pay sixteen dollars to a *Padre* for repeating the ceremony, and to submit to Catholic baptism of each child, infant or adult. They neither invited priests, nor provided them with sacred ornaments, vessels, or places of worship, nor sought to acquire the Spanish language, nor founded schools for the purpose of having it taught to their children, with the dogmas of the national faith. But they attracted commerce to an unfrequented coast, repressed the inroads of the savage, reclaimed the wilderness,

and caused the harvest to mellow on the pastures of the wild horse and the buffalo. Leaving the consideration of their affairs for the present, I shall briefly advert to the course of events in Mexico, so far as they bear upon the subject of this narrative.

In 1822 the United States acknowledged the independence of Mexico, and in 1825 Congress passed an act for authorising the survey of a road from St. Louis in Missouri to Santa Fé, and for treating with the Indian tribes for their consent to have that road pass through their country. The road was opened and a trade commenced which has annually increased, consisting of the exchange of such manufactured articles of the United States as are adapted to the comfort and convenience of the inhabitants of the Eastern Internal Provinces, for the precious metals and some of the staple productions of the country. In December, 1826, a Treaty of Amity and Commerce was signed at London, between Plenipotentiaries of Great Britain and the Mexican Republic. By the 15th article of this treaty, the Government of Mexico engaged to co-operate with his Britannic Majesty "for the abolition of the Slave Trade, and to prohibit all persons inhabiting within the territories of Mexico, in the most effectual manner, from taking any share in such trade."* This provision involved no pecuniary sacrifice on the part of Mexico, which had no commercial marine, nor mercantile capital, to benefit by the African slave-trade, and possessed,

* This article of the Treaty was considered a valuable concession to the cause of humanity. A different policy governed the land at the Treaty of Utrecht, when she rejoiced in acquiring by force of arms the *Asciento*, or monopoly of the supply of Negroes to the Spanish American colonies.

through its Indian and mixed population, an abundant supply of cheaper labour, than could be obtained from imported negroes. It must indeed have been a stipulation to gratify Mexican nationality, as it bore against the slave-holding interest of Spain in the island of Cuba, while it inflicted no injury upon Mexico where the want of hands is seldom or ever known.*

In 1824 insurrections headed by Echavarri and Hernandez were quelled by the government; another, of which Lobato was the leader, having for its object the dismissal of European Spaniards from office, was likewise suppressed and the cause removed. In 1826 considerable excitement prevailed on the subject of suppressing the Mexican Masonic Lodges, in obedience to a Bull directed against them by the Pope. A bill to this effect was introduced into Congress and rejected. Two factions arose (said to have been guided by the rival Scotch and New York lodges, in the capital, and hence called Escoses and Yorkinos), which divided the most influential men of the country. The Escoses were large proprietors, aristocratic in opinion, favourable to Mexican independence, but also favourable to a constitutional monarchy. The Yorkinos, whose lodge was founded by the New York masons, through the agency of Mr. Poinsett, the Envoy of the United States, supported democracy, and opposed a royal, or central government, the Bourbons and the Spaniards. Mr. Poinsett's interference in the local politics of Mexico augmented the jealousy with which the authorities had begun to regard the Anglo-Texans. To counteract the growing influ-

* Ward's Mexico.

ence of the Yorkinos, Colonel Don Jose Montano, towards the close of 1827, proclaimed at Otumba, a plan for the forcible reform of the government.

In January, 1828, General Bravo, the leader of the Escoses, and then Vice-President of the Republic, left the capital, and making common cause with the insurgents, issued a manifesto in favour of Montano. Guerrero with the government troops succeeded in putting down the revolt, and Bravo and his associates were banished. The choice of a president to succeed Victoria, whose term of office expired that year, again awakened the animosities of faction. An arduous and exciting contest terminated in the election of Manuel Gomez Pedraza, the candidate of the Escoses, by a majority of two votes over Vincent Guerrero, the Yorkino candidate. General Santa Anna appeared at the head of a military force, on the 16th of September, declared the return at variance with the popular will, and proclaimed Guerrero President. Unsuccessful at first, and besieged at Oaxaca, he was relieved by a revolutionary movement in the capital, effected by Lobato and Zavala. For the first six days of December the city of Mexico was exposed to all the calamities of civil war. After much bloodshed, Pedraza was obliged to fly, and Guerrero was chosen to the Presidency, on the 6th of January, 1829, with Anastasio Bustamente for Vice-President, and Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna Secretary of War.

On the 27th of July, 1829, an expedition consisting of 4,000 men, under Barradas, prepared at Havannah, with a view to re-establish Spanish au-

thority in Mexico, landed near Tampico. After an occupation of two months, the invading army surrendered on the 10th of September. By a Supreme decree of the 29th of that month slavery was declared to be abolished within the Mexican Republic; and the retaliatory intention of the decree may be inferred from the fact, that the Mexican government had resolved to send a secret mission to Hayti, in order to concert measures with Boyer, to excite the slaves in Cuba to revolt,* a project which, if persisted in, would have provoked the armed interference of the United States. The Mexican laws concerning Negro slavery, in common with the bulk of Congressional enactments, were loosely framed and executed, and the Louisianian settlers evaded them, by introducing their slaves under the name of indentured servants. It was only through the tolerated introduction of slave-labour that persons of education and capital would have ventured to remove to Texas at the early stage of its colonization. Destitute of its aid, they must have fallen from the condition of capitalists to that of labourers, depending solely on the returns obtained from the soil by the hands of themselves and their families. Fearful of the consequences of Guerrero's decree to the welfare of his colony, Austin preferred a remonstrance to the President, who agreed to modify the law in favour of the American settlers. That the policy of the Mexican government originated in no feeling of sympathy for the African race, is demonstrated

* Despatch dated, Department of State, Washington, November 30th, 1829, from Mr. Van Buren to Anthony Butler, Esq., *Chargé d'Affaires* of the United States to Mexico.

by the requirements of the law with regard to free people of colour, to whom admission into Texas was prohibited, unless they came particularly recommended; and even then, their introduction was limited to two military posts, Anahuac and Matagorda.* Slave-labour, which was creative of capital in Texas, would have operated as a burden on the great landed proprietors of Central Mexico, the monopolists of the soil,—who, in their motley pauper population, had all the advantages of slavery, without its attendant expense—the outlay of capital in purchase, or loss by death. In the Northern provinces, the pastoral employment of the inhabitants demanded but a small supply of labourers, and the climate was unsuited to the Negro constitution. The labourers on the sugar estates of the pestilent *Tierra Caliente* were chiefly Zamboes, a perverse, drunken and turbulent race, who worked by the piece, and earned, if industrious, from six to seven rials a-day; equal to three shillings, and three shillings and sixpence, British. The average daily pay of the Indian labourer (the Aztec, or true Mexican Indian, not the obdurate North American savage,) was from one rial (about sixpence) to three. Deducting the holidays claimed by the priests, the Mexican labourer was employed about 200 days in the year, during which he earned some fifty dollars, to maintain a wife and family.

The solicitude evinced by the United States for the acquisition of Texas, through the inexpensive process of diplomatic gladiatorship, in the negocia-

* Exposition of the Law by Francisco Pizarro Martinez, Mexican Consul at New Orleans.

tions with Spain subsequent to the purchase of Louisiana, was redeveloped soon after Mexico had assumed the guise of a Federal Republic. For two or three years after the acknowledgment of its independence by the United States, Mexico was unprovided with a minister from that country. General Jackson, the first who was nominated to the office, declined accepting it. Ninian Edwards, the next selected, signified his acceptance; but circumstances occurred that prevented his entrance upon the duties; Mr. Poinsett was at length accredited, and with instructions which showed that his government still cast a covetous glance towards the green expanse of Texas, and longed to close "every chasm in its whole maritime frontier," by extending its national jurisdiction to the Rio Grande. A letter from Mr. Clay, the Secretary of State, to Mr. Poinsett, dated March 26th, 1825, (at the commencement of the Presidency of Mr. John Quincy Adams,) adverting to certain hypothetical difficulties respecting a boundary line, complained of the line of the Sabine as approaching too closely the "Great Western Mart," and suggested that the Mexican government might not be unwilling to establish, in lieu of it, the Rio Brazos, or the Rio Colorado, or the Snow mountain, or the Rio Grande. The Envoy was commissioned to enlighten the Mexicans, as to the advantages they would derive from shifting the boundary between them and the United States, to a point five or six hundred miles less remote from their capital. In 1827 another and more specific proposition was authorised, arising out of a belief that Mexico placed but little

value upon Texas, in consequence of the extensive concessions, made without equivalent, to citizens of the United States. "These emigrants will carry with them our principles of law, liberty, and religion, and, however much it may be hoped they might be disposed to amalgamate with the ancient inhabitants of Mexico, so far as political freedom is concerned, it would be almost too much to expect that all collisions would be avoided on other subjects. * * * * These collisions may insensibly enlist the sympathies and feelings of the two Republics, and lead to misunderstanding." To obviate these unpleasant contingencies, it was proposed that the boundary line should begin at the embouchure of the Rio Grande, ascend that river to the mouth of the Puerco; thence, ascending that river to its source by a line due north, strike the Arkansas; thence, following the course of the southern bank of the Arkansas to its source, in latitude 42° north; and thence by that parallel of latitude to the South Sea. If this boundary were unattainable, another was to be accepted, beginning at the embouchure of the Colorado, and ascending that river to its source; and thence, by a line due north to the Arkansas, and thence, as above traced, to the South Sea. To secure the first described boundary, the President authorised the United States Envoy to offer the Mexican government a sum not exceeding one million of dollars; in the event of failing to obtain that line, he was authorised to offer half the amount for the line of the Colorado.

None of these proposals found favour with the Mexican government, which preferred adhering to

the general limits as laid down in the treaty of 1819, between the United States and Spain, which was ratified and enforced by treaty between the United States and Mexico, in January 1828. But the old Roman perseverance of the Northern Republic cleaved to its object. On the 25th of August, 1829, (the first year of General Jackson's Presidency,) fresh instructions were issued to Mr. Poinsett, by the Secretary of State, Mr. Van Buren. Induced by "a deep conviction of the real necessity of the proposed acquisition, not only as a guard for the western frontier, and the protection of New Orleans, but also to secure for ever to the inhabitants of the valley of the Mississippi the undisputed and undisturbed possession of the navigation of that river;" the President authorised the minister to open, without delay, a negociation with the Mexican government, for the purchase of "so much of the province of Texas as is hereinafter described, or for such a part thereof as they can be induced to cede, if the same be conformable to either of the locations with which you are herewith furnished."

The locations alluded to were four in number. First: The territory lying east of a line beginning at the Gulf of Mexico, in the centre of the desert, or Grand Prairie, west of the Nueces, and following the course of the centre of that desert, or prairie, north to the mountains; dividing the waters of the Rio Grande from those that run eastwards to the gulf; and until it strikes the present boundary at the 42° of north latitude.—Second: The territory east of a line commencing on the western bank of the La Baca and its embouchure, and continuing

up that river to the head of its most westerly source; thence due north until the line shall strike the Colorado; thence up the westerly bank of the Colorado, to the head of its principal stream; thence by the most direct course that would intersect the United States boundary line at 42° north latitude, and include the head waters of the Arkansas and Red rivers.—Third: A line to commence at the embouchure of the Colorado and continue up the west bank to the head of the principal stream, and thence by a line drawn so as to intersect the United States boundary in 42° north latitude; including also the head waters of Arkansas and Red rivers.—Fourth: A line to commence at the embouchure of the Brazos river, and proceed along its western bank to the head of its most westerly branch, and thence by such a course as would intersect the boundary in 42° north latitude. In return for the cession of territory consequent on the adoption of the first of these lines, Mr. Poinsett was authorised "to go as high as five millions," which offer was to regulate the scale of pecuniary equivalent to be tendered for the other boundaries respectively.

The United States had large pecuniary claims, in the way of indemnity, upon the Mexican government, which might perhaps have covered the contemplated purchase, and the time was deemed auspicious for the cession. "The comparatively small value of the territory in question to Mexico; its remote and disconnected situation; the unsettled condition of her affairs; the depressed and languishing state of her finances; and the still, at this

moment, particularly threatening attitude of Spain: all combine to point out and recommend to Mexico the policy of parting with a portion of her territory, of very limited and contingent benefit, to supply herself with the means of defending the residue with the better prospect of success, and with less onerous burdens to her citizens." Before this letter of instructions reached the American Envoy, the Mexican government, moved by strong feelings of dislike to Mr. Poinsett, in consequence of his alleged interference in the domestic affairs of the country, peremptorily demanded his recall. The demand was acceded to, and Colonel Anthony Butler of Mississippi was appointed his successor, but no progress was made in the negociation for the purchase of a more extended western boundary.*

The Mexican President Guerrero, installed by military force, trusted to the same agency for securing his tenure of power. The charge of maintaining a dictatorship having been preferred against him, Bustamente, who was in command of a body

* General James Hamilton of South Carolina, who represented Texas in the late Treaty between Great Britain and that Republic, was offered, in 1829, the mission to Mexico by General Jackson, to treat for the purchase of the territory and its annexation to the United States, but, owing to domestic engagements, was obliged to decline the appointment. General Hamilton had been a member of Congress for South Carolina seven years, was at the head of the Military Committee of the House of Representatives, and one of the leaders of the House in opposition to the administration of Mr. John Quincy Adams; he was afterwards Governor of South Carolina, and signed the ordinance of the Convention of that State nullifying the Tariff.

of troops, held in readiness to repel Spanish invasion, thought it a favourable time for striking a blow for supremacy. Demanding concessions which he knew would not be granted, he proceeded towards the capital, for the ostensible purpose of reforming executive abuses. The government was overthrown, without a struggle. Guerrero fled to the mountains, and Bustamente assumed the chief authority. His administration was sanguinary and proscriptive; his object being the subversion of the Federal Constitution, and the establishment of a central government. Centralism was strong in the support of the military, the priesthood, and the great Creole proprietors; the Federation was popular with the majority of the inhabitants, and was sustained by their votes.

In the spring of 1830, Juan José Codallas, an influential Mexican who had been driven by persecution to the mountains, published a Plan, demanding of Bustamente the restoration of civil authority. Encouraged by this demonstration, Guerrero reappeared in the field, but the Constitutionalists were unsuccessful. Codallas was captured, and Guerrero, obliged to fly to Acapulco, was placed in the hands of his enemies by the commander of a Sardinian vessel employed for the purpose. Conveyed to Oaxaca, he was tried by a mock court-martial, condemned as a traitor, and executed in February, 1831.

A decree issued by Bustamente on the 6th of April, 1830, clearly testified the altered dispositions of the Mexican Government towards the

Anglo-American settlers in Texas. The eleventh article of that decree prohibited the citizens of foreign countries lying adjacent to the Mexican territories from settling as colonists in the States or Territories of the Republic adjoining such countries, and suspended those contracts of colonization, the terms of which were opposed to this article. No change was to be made with respect to the colonies already established, nor with respect to the slaves which they contained; but the further introduction of slaves was forbidden. The entrance of foreigners from the frontier of the North was prohibited under any pretence whatever, unless furnished with passports signed by a Mexican agent in the country whence they came. Convicts, for the construction of public works, and Mexican families, for settlement, were to be conveyed to the new colonies, for the regulation of which the government was to frame a system, and to appoint commissioners to visit those on the frontier, and contract with the State Legislatures for the purchase, by the nation, of lands suitable for the settlement of Mexicans and foreigners.

This unforeseen and rigorous enactment produced much discontent in Texas, against which it was evidently directed. It subjected the immigrants to great injury and loss: many already settled were denied titles to land, and others, who had abandoned their homes in the United States, were ordered to quit the country on their arrival, being the first intimation they received of the existence of the law. Through the intervention of Colonel Austin with

the Government Commissioner, the severity of these proceedings was somewhat mitigated—the operation of the decree being suspended for a time, as regarded sea-borne emigrants—but no land titles were given except in Austin's and Dewitt's Colonies. Simultaneously with the abrupt obstruction of Anglo-American settlements, additions were made to the garrisons of Texas, and civil authority began to be superseded by martial law.

The grants conceded to Empresarios now extended nearly over the whole surface of Texas. In the jurisdiction of Nacogdoches there were five: those of Zavala, Vehlein, Burnet, Filisola, and Milam. In the jurisdiction of the Brazos, three: the several grants made to Stephen Austin—one of which, by the approval of the Supreme Executive power of the Federal government of Mexico, empowered him to settle three hundred foreign families within the ten league reserve on the coast, between the Labaca and San Jacinto rivers. In the jurisdiction of Bexar, five: those of Dewitt, De Leon (Mexican), Bexar department—Power (Irish), M'Mullen, and M'Gloine (Irish). In the Northern and North-western parts of the province were Cameron's first and second grants, Wilson and Exter's, and those of Leftwich and Woodbury. Besides the contracts previously noted as having been partially fulfilled, were those of De Leon and the Irish Empresarios. Most of the grants, however, lapsed to the government, and some were included in new concessions. The only contractor who was thoroughly successful in executing his engagements was Stephen Austin;

[illegible] the country was steadily advancing in popula-[illegible] resources, and only required, to insure its [illegible]ness and prosperity, that just and peaceful [illegible]inistration of its affairs which ill accorded with [illegible] presence of a licentious soldiery, and the lawless ascendency of their dictatorial chiefs.

END OF VOL. I.

[illegible] Sons, Stamford Street

